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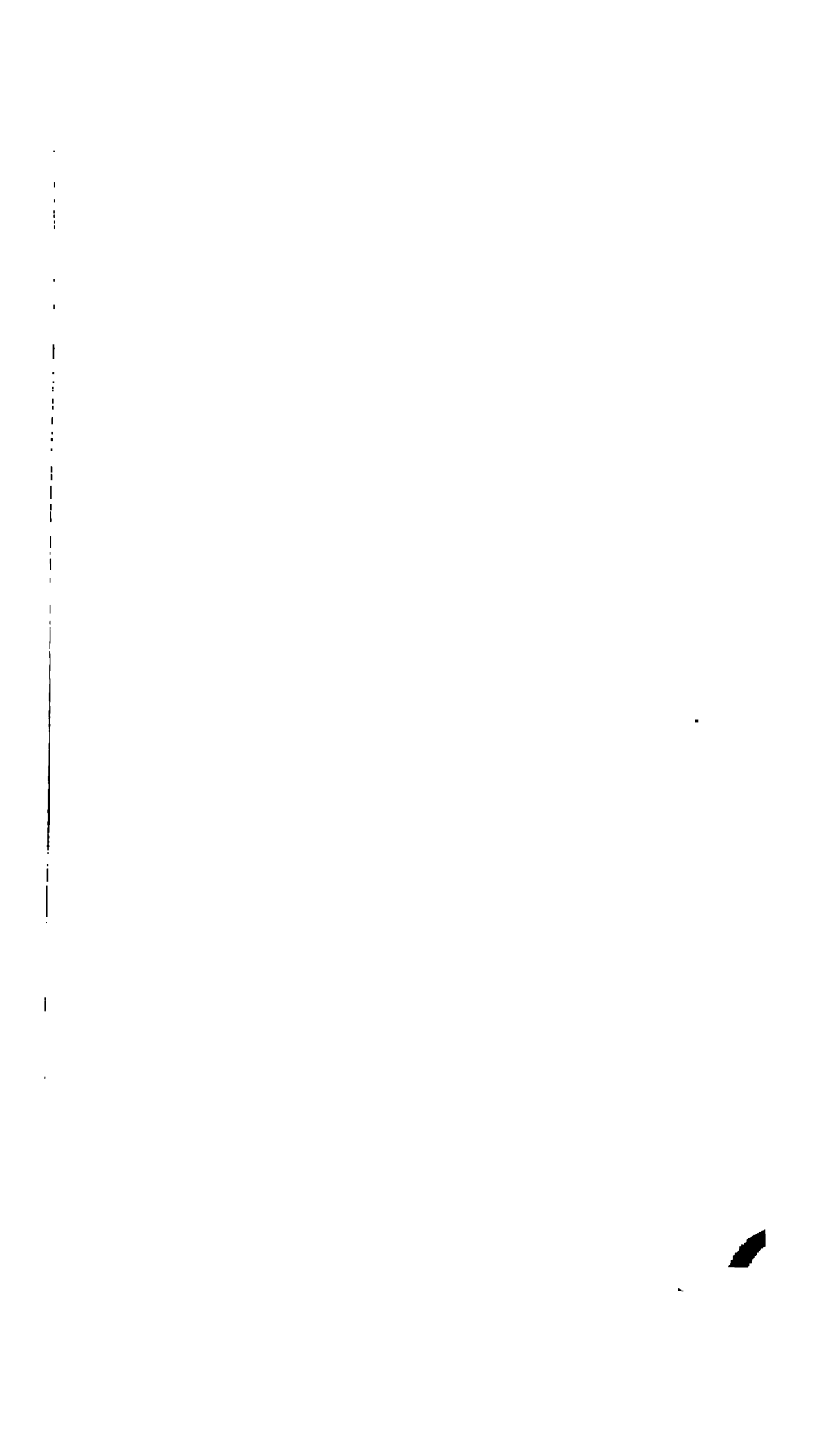
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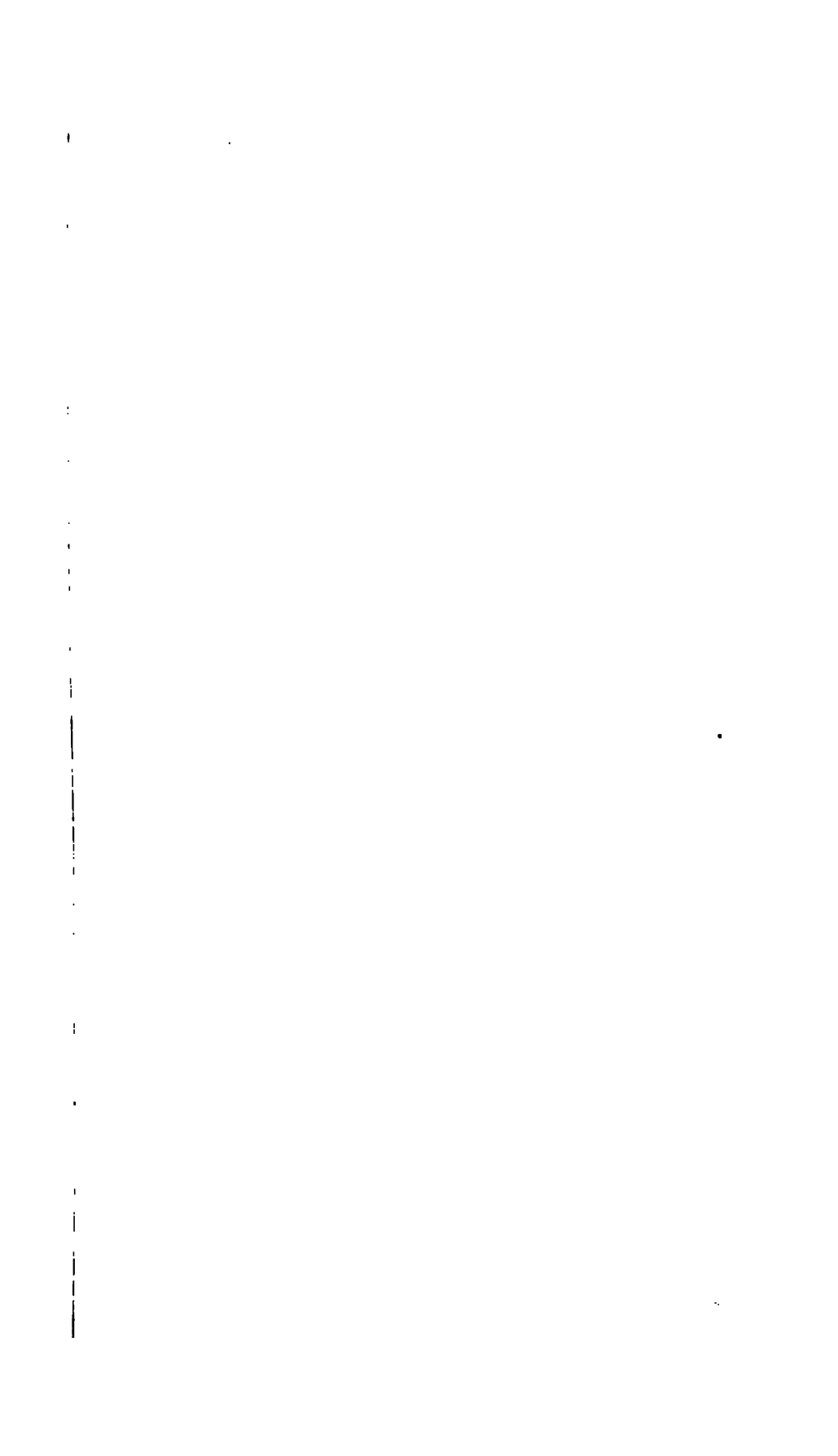
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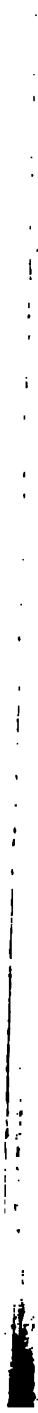








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TO  
CHARLES DICKENS.

GENIUS AND ITS REWARDS ARE BRIEFLY TOLD :  
A LIBERAL NATURE AND A NIGGARD DOOM,  
A DIFFICULT JOURNEY TO A SPLENDID TOMB.  
NEW-WRIT, NOR LIGHTLY WEIGHED, THAT STORY OLD  
IN GENTLE GOLDSMITH'S LIFE I HERE UNFOLD :  
THRO' OTHER THAN LONE WILD OR DESERT-GLOOM,  
IN ITS MERE JOY AND PAIN, ITS BLIGHT AND BLOOM,  
ADVENTUROUS. COME WITH ME AND BEHOLD,  
O FRIEND WITH HEART AS GENTLE FOR DISTRESS,  
AS RESOLUTE WITH FINE WISE THOUGHTS TO BIND  
THE HAPPIEST TO THE UNHAPPIEST OF OUR KIND,  
THAT THERE IS FIERCER CROWDED MISERY  
IN GARRET-TOIL AND LONDON LONELINESS  
THAN IN CRUEL ISLANDS 'MID THE FAR-OFF SEA.

JOHN FORSTER.

*March, 1848.*





'It seems rational to hope,' says Johnson in the *Life of Savage*, 'that minds qualified for great attainments should first 'endeavour their own benefit; and that they who are most 'able to teach others the way to happiness, should with most 'certainty follow it themselves: but this expectation, however 'plausible, has been very frequently disappointed.' Perhaps not so frequently as the earnest biographer imagined. Much depends on what we look to for our benefit, much on what we follow as the way to happiness. It may not be for the one, and may have led us far out of the way of the other, that we had acted on the world's estimate of worldly success, and to that directed our 'endeavour.' So might we ourselves have blocked up the path, which it was our hope to have pointed out to others; and, in the straits of a selfish profit, made wreck of 'great attainments.'

OLIVER GOLDSMITH, whose *Life and Adventures* should be known to all who know his writings, must be held to have succeeded in nothing that the world would have had him succeed in. He was intended for a clergyman, and was rejected

when he applied for orders ; he practised as a physician, and never made what would have paid for a degree. The world did not ask him to write, but he wrote and paid the penalty. His existence was a continued privation. The days were few, in which he had resources for the night, or dared to look forward to the morrow. There was not any miserable want, in the long and sordid catalogue, which in its turn and in all its bitterness he did not feel. The experience of those to whom he makes affecting reference in his *Animated Nature*, 'people who die really of hunger, in common language of a 'broken heart,' was his own. And when he succeeded at the last, success was but a feeble sunshine on a rapidly approaching decay, which was to lead him, by its flickering and uncertain light, to an early grave.

Self-benefit seems out of the question here : the way to happiness, distant indeed from this. But if we look a little closer, we shall see that he passes through it all without one enduring stain upon the childlike purity of his heart. Much misery vanishes when that is known : when it is remembered too, that in spite of it, a *Vicar of Wakefield* was written ; nay, that without it, in all human probability, a *Vicar of Wakefield* could not have been written. Fifty-six years after its author's death, a great German thinker, and wise man, recounted to a friend how much he had been indebted to the celebrated Irishman. 'It is not to be described,' wrote Goethe to Zelter, in 1830, 'the effect that Goldsmith's *Vicar* had upon me, just 'at the critical moment of mental development. That lofty 'and benevolent irony, that fair and indulgent view of all

'infirmities and faults, that meekness under all calamities, that equanimity under all changes and chances, and the whole train of kindred virtues, whatever names they bear, proved my best education; and in the end,' he added with sound philosophy, 'these are the thoughts and feelings which have reclaimed us from all the errors of life.'

And why were they so enforced in that charming book, but because the writer had undergone them all; because they had reclaimed himself, not from the world's errors only, but also from its suffering and care; and because his own *Life and Adventures* had been the same chequered and beautiful romance of the triumph of good over evil.

Though what is called worldly success, then, was not attained by Goldsmith, it may be that the way to happiness was not missed wholly. The sincere and sad biographer of Savage, might have profited by the example. His own 'benefit' he had not successfully 'endeavoured,' when the gloom of his early life embittered life to the last, and the trouble he had endured was made excuse for a sorrowful philosophy, and for manners that were an outrage to the kindness of his heart. Goldsmith had borne what Johnson bore. Of the calamities to which the literary life is subject,

'Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the gaol,'

none had been spared to him. But they found him, and left him, gentle; and though the discipline that taught him charity had little contributed to his social ease, by unfeigned sincerity and unaffected simplicity of heart he diffused every social



enjoyment. When his conduct least agreed with his writings, these characteristics failed him not. What he gained, was the gain of others; what he lost, concerned only himself; he suffered, but he never inflicted, pain. Insensibility was what he wanted most; and it is amazing to think how small an amount of it would have exalted Doctor Goldsmith's position in the literary circles of his day. He lost caste because he could not acquire it. He could not assume the habit of indifference, or trade upon the gravity of his own repute. Admirers in a room, whom his entrance had 'struck with awe,' might be seen 'riding out upon his back.' It was hard, he said to Reynolds, that literary fame should intercept people's liking and fondness; and for this, no doubt, he forfeited much dignity and fame. 'He is an inspired idiot,' cried Walpole. 'He does not know the difference of a turkey from a goose,' said Cumberland. 'Sir,' shouted Johnson, 'he knows nothing. He has made up his mind about nothing.' Few cared to think or speak of him but as little Goldy, honest Goldy; and every one laughed at him for the oddity of his blunders, and the awkwardness of his manners.

But I invite the reader to his *Life and Adventures*. No un instructive explanation of all this may possibly await us there. We will together review the scene, and move among its actors as they play their parts.

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**BOOK THE FIRST.**





## OLIVER

AS THE

SIZAR, STUDENT, TRAVELLER, APOTHECARY'S  
 JOURNEYMAN, USHER, AND POOR  
 PHYSICIAN.

THE marble in Westminster  
 Abbey is correct in the place,  
 but not in the time, of the birth of

1728  
 to  
 1757

OLIVER GOLDSMITH. He  
 was born at a lonely, re-  
 mote, and almost inaccess-

sible Irish village called  
 Pallas, or Pallasmore, the  
 property of the Edge-  
 worths of Edgeworths-  
 town, in the county of  
 Longford, on the 10th  
 of November, 1728: a  
 little more than three

years earlier than the date upon his epitaph. His father,



the Reverend Charles Goldsmith, was a Protestant clergyman with an uncertain stipend, which, with the help of some fields he farmed, and occasional duties performed for the rector of an adjoining parish who was uncle to his wife, averaged forty pounds a year. A new birth was but a new burthen; and little dreamt the humble village preacher, then or ever, that from the date of that tenth of November on which his Oliver was born, his own virtues and very foibles were to be a legacy of pleasure to many generations of men. For they who have loved, laughed, and wept, with the Man in Black of the *Citizen of the World*, the Preacher of the *Deserted Village*, and Doctor Primrose in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, have given laughter, love, and tears, to the Reverend Charles Goldsmith.

The death of the rector of Kilkenny West improved his fortunes. He succeeded in 1730 to this living of his wife's uncle; his income of forty pounds was raised to nearly two hundred; and Oliver had not completed his second year when the family moved from Pallasmore to a respectable house and farm on the verge of the pretty little village of Lissoy, 'in the county of Westmeath, barony of Kilkenny 'West,' some six miles from Pallasmore, and about midway between the towns of Ballymahon and Athlone. The first-born, Margaret, appears to have died in childhood; and the family, at this time consisting of Catherine, Henry, Jane, and Oliver, born at Pallasmore, was in the next ten years increased by Maurice, Charles, and John, born at

Lissoy. The youngest, as the eldest, died in youth ; Charles went in his twentieth year, a friendless adventurer, to Jamaica, and, after long self-exile, died, little more than thirty years since, in a poor lodging of Somers' Town ; Maurice was put to the trade of a cabinet maker, kept a meagre shop in Charlestown in the county of Roscommon, and 'departed from a miserable life' in 1792 ; Henry followed his father's calling, and died as he had lived, a humble village preacher and schoolmaster, in 1768 ; Catherine married a wealthy husband, Mr. Hodson, Jane a poor one, Mr. Johnston, and both died in Athlone, some years after the death of that celebrated brother to whose *Life and Adventures* these pages are devoted.

A trusted dependant in Charles Goldsmith's house ; a young woman, afterwards known as Elizabeth Delap, and schoolmistress of Lissoy ; first put a book into Oliver Goldsmith's hands. She taught him his letters ; lived till it was matter of pride to remember ; and at the ripe age of ninety, when the great writer had been thirteen years in his grave, boasted of it with



'her last breath.' That her success in the task had not been much to boast of, she at other times confessed. 'Never was 'so dull a boy : he seemed impenetrably stupid,' said the

good Elizabeth Delap, when she bored her friends about the celebrated Doctor Goldsmith. 'He was a plant that 'flowered late,' said Johnson to Boswell: 'there was 'nothing remarkable about him when young.' And this was probably true. It is said that the richer a nature is, the harder and more slow its development is like to be.

At the age of six, Oliver was handed over to the village school, kept by Mr. Thomas Byrne. Looking back from this distance of time, and penetrating through greater obscurity than its own cabin-smoke into that Lissoy academy, it is to be discovered that this excellent Mr. Byrne, retired quarter-master of an Irish regiment that had served in Marlborough's wars, was more given to 'shoulder a crutch and show how fields were won,' and certainly more apt to teach wild legends of an Irish hovel, or tell of Carolan the Blind, James Freeny, Rogues and Rapparrees, than to inculcate what are called the Humanities. He seems to have preferred a *Virgil* in Irish verse to a Roman *Virgil*, and to have had more faith in fairies than in fluxions. Little Oliver came away from him much as he went: but for certain wandering unsettled tastes, which his friends thought to have been here implanted in him, and the enduring effects of a terrible disease.

An attack of confluent small-pox which nearly proved mortal, had left deep and indelible traces on his face, for ever settled his small pretension to good looks, and

exposed him to jest and sarcasm. Kind-natured Mr. Byrne might best have reconciled him to it, used to his temper as no doubt he had become; and it was doubly unfortunate to be sent at such a time away from home, to a school among strangers, at once to taste the bitterness of those school experiences which too early and sadly teach the shy, ill-favoured, backward boy, what tyrannies the world has to inflict, and what sufferings to endure. But to the Reverend Mr. Griffin's superior school of Elphin, in Roscommon, it was resolved to send him; and at the house of an uncle John, at Ballyoughter, in the neighbourhood of Elphin, he was lodged and boarded. The knowledge of *Ovid* and *Horace*, introduced to him here, was the least and pleasantest, though the most difficult it might be, of what he had now to learn. It was the learning of bitter years: not by the schoolmaster, but by the school-fellows, of this poor little, 'thick,' 'pale-faced,' pock-marked boy, administered. 'I have often conversed with his contemporaries and school-fellows,' said Doctor Streat, who succeeded, on the death of Charles Goldsmith's eldest son, to the Pallasmore pastoral duties and munificent rewards, 'and they all considered him a 'stupid, heavy blockhead, little better than a fool, whom 'every one made fun of.'

It was early to trample fun out of a child; and he bore marks of it to his dying day. It had not been his least qualification as game for laughter, that all confessed his nature to be 'kind and affectionate,' and his temper



‘cheerful and agreeable.’ But much ‘fun’ extracted, some change appeared; and ‘solemn yet gay, good-natured yet ‘irritable, petulant yet appeased by the smallest concession,’ were the terms in which people spoke of him then. In those words, ‘as he afterwards appeared to his acquaintances in London,’ his elder sister described his school-days to Doctor Percy, Bishop of Dromore, when those great acquaintances were seeking materials for his Life. ‘He seemed to possess two natures,’ was the learned comment, at once upon his childhood and his manhood. And there was sense in it. For struggling ever, though always unavailingly, against feelings which God had given him, were fears he had to thank the World for.

‘Why Noll!’ exclaimed a visitor at uncle John’s, ‘you are become a fright! When do you mean to get handsome again?’ Oliver moved in silence to the window. The speaker, a thoughtless and notorious scapegrace of the Goldsmith family, repeated the question with a worse sneer: and ‘I mean to get better, sir, when you do!’ was the boy’s retort, which has delighted his biographers for its quickness of repartee. Probably it was something more than smartness. Other like evidences of precocious wit describe the poor lad, while dancing a hornpipe in the house of uncle John, held up to ridicule by the musician of the party as Ugly Æsop, and retorting on his opponent the name of Æsop’s Monkey. The couplet was thought worth preserving, as the first formal effort of Oliver’s genius, by Percy, Malone, and the rest, who compiled that

biographical preface to the *Miscellaneous Works* on which the subsequent biographies have been founded.

Our herald hath proclaimed this saying,  
See Æsop dancing, and his monkey playing.

But these things may stand for more than quickness of repartee. It is even possible that the secret might be found in them, of much that has been virtuously condemned for vanity in Goldsmith. Vanity it may have been; but it sprang from the opposite source to that in which its ordinary forms have birth. Fielding describes a class of men who feed upon their own hearts: who are egotists, as he says, the wrong way. If Goldsmith was vain, it was the wrong way. It arose, not from overweening self-complacency in supposed advantages, but from what the world had forced him since his earliest youth to feel, intense uneasy consciousness of supposed defects. His resources of boyhood went as manhood came. There was no longer the cricket-match, the horn-pipe, an active descent upon an orchard, or a game of fives or foot-ball, to purge unhealthy humours and 'clear out the mind.' There was no old dairy-maid, no Peggy Golden, to beguile childish sorrows, or, as he mournfully recalls in one of his delightful Essays, to sing him into pleasant tears with *Johnny Armstrong's Last Good Night*, or the *Cruelty of Barbara Allen*. It was his ardent wish in later years, the years when those Essays were written, to be on good terms with the society

around him ; and, finding it essential first of all to be on good terms with himself, would have restored by fantastic dress and other innocent follies, what the world had all his life done its best to banter him out of. It was to no purpose he made the attempt. It could but assume a greater absurdity with him : so unwitting a contrast to gentleness, to simplicity, to an utter absence of disguise, in his real nature. ‘My dear Doctor,’ said Johnson, ‘how is a man the worse, I wonder, in his health, purse, or character, for being called *Holofernes*?’ ‘How you may relish being called *Holofernes*,’ replied Goldsmith, ‘I do not know : but I do not like at least to play *Good-man Dull*.’ It was the part he was, much against his will, set down for from the first.

But was there not still the means, at the fireside of his good-hearted father, of turning these childish rebuffs to something of a wholesome discipline ? Alas ! little. There was little of worldly wisdom in the home circle of the kind but simple preacher, to make a profit of this worldly experience. ‘My father’s education,’ says the *Man in Black*, ‘was above his fortune, and his generosity greater than his education. . . He told the story of the ivy-tree, and that was laughed at ; he repeated the jest of the two scholars and one pair of breeches, and the company laughed at that ; but the story of Taffy in the Sedan-chair was sure to set the table in a roar : thus his pleasure increased in proportion to the pleasure he gave ; he loved all the world ; and he fancied all the world loved him.



‘We were told that universal benevolence was what first cemented society; we were taught to consider all the wants of mankind as our own; to regard the human face divine with affection and esteem: he wound us up to be mere machines of pity, and rendered us incapable of withstanding the slightest impulse made either by real or fictitious distress: in a word, we were perfectly instructed in the art of giving away thousands, before we were taught the more necessary qualifications of getting a farthing.’

Acquisitions highly primitive, and supporting what seems to have been the common fame of the Goldsmith race. ‘The Goldsmiths were always a strange family,’ confessed three different branches of them, in as many different quarters of Ireland, when inquiries were made by Mr. Prior, the poet’s last and most careful biographer. ‘They rarely acted like other people: their hearts were always in the right place, but their heads seemed to be doing anything but what they ought.’ In opinions or confessions of this kind, however, the heart’s right place is not so well discriminated as it might be, or collision with the head would be oftener avoided. Worthy Doctor Strean expressed himself more correctly when Mr. Mangin was making his inquiries twenty-five years ago. ‘Several of the family and name,’ he said, ‘live near Elphin, who, as well as the Poet, were, and are, remarkable for their worth, but of no cleverness in the affairs of the world.’

If cleverness in the affairs of the world is what the head should be always versed in, to be meditating what

*it ought*, poor Oliver was a grave defaulter. We are all of us, it is said, more or less related to Chaos; and with him, to the last, there was much that lay unredeemed from its void. Sturdy boys, who work a gallant way through school, and are the lights of their college, and grow up to thriving eminence in their several callings, and found respectable families, are seldom troubled with this relationship, till Chaos reclaims them altogether, and they die and are forgotten. All men have their advantages, and that is theirs. But it shows too great a pride in what they have, to think the whole world should be under pains and penalties to possess it too; and to set up so many doleful lamentations over this poor, weak, confused, erratic, Goldsmith nature. Their tone will not be taken here: the writer having no pretension to its moral dignity. Consideration will be had for the harsh lessons this boy so early and bitterly encountered; it will not be forgotten that feeling, not always rightly guided or controlled, but sometimes in a large excess, must almost of necessity be his who has it in charge to dispense largely, variously, and freely to others; and in the endeavour to show that the heart of Oliver Goldsmith was indeed rightly placed, it may appear, on the whole, that his head profited by its example.

At the age of eleven he was removed from Mr. Griffin's, and put to a school of repute at Athlone, about five miles from his father's house, and kept by a Reverend Mr.

Campbell. At about the same time his brother Henry went as a pensioner to Dublin University, and it was resolved that in due course Oliver should follow him: a determination, his sister told Dr. Percy, which replaced that of putting him to a common trade, on some verses he had written at Elphin School, and other evidence of some liveliness of talent, being suddenly brought to light. He remained at Athlone two years; and when Mr. Campbell's ill health obliged him to resign his charge, was removed to the school of Edgeworthstown, kept by the Reverend Patrick Hughes. Here he stayed nearly four years, and was long remembered by the school acquaintance he formed: of whom Mr. Beatty, Mr. Nugent, Mr. Roach, and Mr. Daly, communicated with Bishop Percy and his friends, when the first memoir was compiled. They recollected Mr. Hughes's special kindness to him, and 'thinking well' of him, as matters not then to be accounted for. The good master had been Charles Goldsmith's friend. They dwelt upon his ugliness and awkward manners, and professed to recount even the studies he liked or disliked. *Ovid* and *Horace* were welcome to him; he hated *Cicero*; *Livy* was his delight; and when he had mastered *Tacitus*, it opened him a new source of pleasure. His temper they described as ultra-sensitive; but though quick to take offence, he was more feverishly ready to forgive. They said, that though at first diffident and backward in the extreme, he mustered sufficient boldness in time to take even a leader's place in the boyish

sports, and particularly at fives or ball-playing. Whenever a trick was going forward, they added, 'Noll Goldsmith' was certain to be in it: actor or victim.

Of his holidays, Ballymahon was the central attraction; and here, too, recollection was vivid and busy, as soon as his name grew famous. An old man who directed the sports of the place, and kept the ball-court in those days, long subsisted on his stories of 'Master Noll.' The narrative masterpiece of this ancient 'Jack Fitzsimmons' related to the depredation of the orchard of Tirlichen, by the youth and his companions. Fitzsimmons also vouched to the Reverend John Graham for the entire truth of the adventure so currently and confidently told by his Irish acquaintance, on which, if true, the leading incident of *She Stoops to Conquer* was founded. At the close of his last holidays, then a lad of nearly seventeen, he left home for Edgeworthstown: mounted on a borrowed hack which a friend was to restore to Lissoy, and with store of unaccustomed wealth, a guinea, in his pocket. The delicious taste of independence beguiled him to a loitering, lingering, pleasant enjoyment of the journey; and instead of finding himself under Mr. Hughes's roof at night-fall, night fell upon him some two or three miles out of the direct road, in the middle of the streets of Ardagh. But nothing could disconcert the owner of a guinea, who, with lofty confident air, inquired of a person passing, the way to the town's best house of entertainment. The man addressed was the wag of Ardagh, Mr. Cornelius

Kelly, and the schoolboy swagger was irresistible provocation to a jest. Submissively he turned back with horse and rider till they came within a pace or two of the great Squire Featherstone's, to which he respectfully pointed as the 'best house' of Ardagh. Oliver rang at the gate, gave his beast in charge with authoritative rigour, and was shown as a supposed expected guest into the parlour of the Squire. These were days when Irish Innkeepers and Irish Squires more nearly approximated than now; and Mr. Featherstone, unlike the excellent but explosive Mr. Hardcastle, is said to have seen the mistake and humoured it. Oliver had a supper which gave him so much satisfaction, that he ordered a bottle of wine to follow; and the attentive landlord was not only forced to drink with him, but, with like familiar condescension, the wife and pretty daughter were invited to the supper-room. Going to bed, he stopped to give special instructions for a hot cake to breakfast; and it was not till he had dispatched this meal, and was looking at his guinea with pathetic aspect of farewell, that the truth was told him by the good-natured Squire. The late Sir Thomas Featherstone, grandson to the supposed innkeeper, had faith in the adventure; and told Mr. Graham that as his grandfather and Charles Goldsmith had been college acquaintance, it might the better be accounted for.

But the school-days of Oliver Goldsmith are now to close. Within the last year there had been some changes at Lissoy, which not a little affected the family fortunes. Catherine, the elder sister, had privately married a Mr.



Daniel Hodson, 'the son of a gentleman of good property, residing at St. John's, near Athlone.' The young man was at the time availing himself of Henry Goldsmith's services as private tutor: Henry having obtained a scholarship two years before, and assisting the family resources with such employment of his college distinction. The good Charles Goldsmith was greatly indignant at the marriage, and on reproaches from the elder Hodson, 'made a sacrifice detrimental to the interests of his family.' He entered into a legal engagement, still registered in the Dublin Four Courts, and bearing date the 7th of September, 1744, 'to pay to Daniel Hodson, Esq., of St. John's, Roscommon, £400 as the marriage portion of his daughter Catherine, then the wife of the said Daniel Hodson.' But it could not be effected without sacrifice of his tithes and rented land; and it was a sacrifice, as it seems to me, made in a spirit of very simple and very false pride. Mr. Prior, who discovered the deed, attributes it to 'the highest sense of honour;' but it must surely be doubted if an act which, to elevate the pretensions of one child, and adapt them to those of the man she had married, inflicted beggary on the rest, should be so referred to. Oliver was the first to taste its bitterness. It was announced to him that he could not go to college as Henry had gone, a Pensioner; but must consent to enter it, a Sizar.

The first thing exacted of a sizar, in those days, was proof of classical attainments. He was to show himself, to a

certain reasonable extent, a good scholar; in return for which, being clad in a black gown of coarse stuff without sleeves, he was marked with the servant's badge of a red cap, and put to the servant's offices of sweeping courts in the morning, carrying up dishes from the kitchen to the fellows-dining-table in the afternoon, and waiting in the hall till the fellows had dined. This; commons, teaching, and chambers, being in return greatly reduced; is called by Goldsmith's last biographer, 'One of those judicious and considerate arrangements of the founders of such institutions, that gives to the less opulent the opportunity of cultivating learning at a trifling expense;' but it is called by Goldsmith himself, in his *Essay on Polite Literature*, a 'Contradiction' for which he should blush to ask a reason from men of learning and virtue: 'that youths acquiring the liberal arts should at the same time be treated as slaves; at once studying freedom and practising servitude.'

To this contradiction he is now himself doomed; the yet hardest lesson in his life's hard school. He resisted with all his strength: little less than a whole year, it is said, obstinately resisted, the new contempts and loss of worldly consideration thus bitterly set before him. He would rather have gone to the trade chalked out for him as his rough alternative; when Uncle Contarine interfered.

This was an excellent man; and with some means, though very far from considerable, to do justice to his kindly impulses. In youth he had been the college companion of Bishop Berkeley, and was worthy to have had so

divine a friend. He, too, was a clergyman ; and held the living of Kilmore, near Carrick-on-Shannon, which he afterwards changed to that of Oran, near Roscommon ; where he built the house of Emblemore, changed to that of Tempe by its subsequent possessor, Mr. Edward Mills, Goldsmith's relative and contemporary. Mr. Contarine had married Charles Goldsmith's sister (who died at about this time, leaving one child), and was the only member of the Goldsmith family of whom we have solid evidence that he at any time took pains with Oliver, or anything like a real pride in him. He bore the greater part of his school expenses ; and was used to receive him with delight in holidays, as the playfellow of his daughter Jane ; a year or two older than Oliver, and some seven years after this married to a Mr. Lauder. How little the most charitable of men will make allowance for differences of temper and disposition in the education of youth, is too well known : Mr. Contarine told Oliver that he had himself been a sizar, and that it had not availed to withhold from *him* the friendship of the great and the good.

His counsel prevailed. The youth went to Dublin, passed the examination, and on the 11th of June, 1745, was admitted, last in the list of eight who so presented themselves, a sizar of Trinity College. There most speedily to earn that experience, which, on his elder brother afterwards consulting him as to the education of his son, prompted him to answer thus : ' If he has ambition, ' strong passions, and an exquisite sensibility of contempt,

‘do not send him to your college, unless you have no other trade for him except your own.’

Flood, who was then in the college, does not seem to have noticed Goldsmith : but a greater than Flood, though himself little notable at college, said he perfectly recollected his old fellow-student, when they afterwards met at Sir Joshua’s. Not that there was much for an Edmund Burke to recollect of him. Little went well with Goldsmith in his student course. He had a menial position, a savage brute for tutor, and few inclinations to the study exacted. He was not indeed, as perhaps never living creature in this world was, without his consolations : he could sing a song well, and, at a new insult or outrage, could blow off excitement through his flute with a kind of desperate ‘mechanical vehemence.’ At the worst he had, as he describes it himself, a ‘knack at hoping ;’ and at all times, it must with equal certainty be affirmed, a knack at getting into scrapes. Like Samuel Johnson at Oxford, he avoided lectures when he could, and was a loungee at the college gate. The popular picture of him in these Dublin University days, is little more than of a slow, hesitating, somewhat hollow voice, heard seldom and always to great disadvantage in the class-rooms ; and of a low-sized, thick, robust, ungainly figure, lounging about the college courts on the wait for misery and ill-luck.

His Edgeworthstown schoolfellow, Beatty, had entered among the sizars with him, and for a time shared his rooms. Mr. Prior describes them as the top-rooms adjoining the

library of the building numbered 35, where the name of Oliver Goldsmith may still be seen, scratched by himself upon a window-pane. Another sizar, Marshall, is said to have been another of his chums. Among his occasional associates, were certainly Edward Mills, his relative; Robert Bryanton, a Ballymahon youth, also his relative, of whom he was fond; Charles and Edward Purdon, whom he lived to befriend; James Willington, whose name he afterwards had permission to use in London, for low literary work he was ashamed to put his own to; Wilson and Kearney, subsequently doctors and fellows of the college; Wolfen, also well known; and Lauchlan Maclean, whose political pamphlets, unaccepted challenge to Wilkes, and general party exertions, made a noise in the world twenty or thirty years later. But it is a saying of Johnson that not till a man becomes famous, are any wonderful feats of memory or condescension performed respecting him; and it seems tolerably evident that, with the exception of perhaps Bryanton and Beatty, not one owner of the names recounted put himself in friendly relation with the sizar, to elevate, assist, or cheer him. Richard Malone, afterwards Lord Sunderlin; Bernard, Marlay, and Stopford, afterwards worthy bishops of those names; found nothing more pleasant than to talk of 'their old fellow-collegian 'Doctor Goldsmith,' in the painting-room of Reynolds: but nothing, I suspect, so difficult, thriving lads as they were in these earlier days, than to vouchsafe recognition to the unthriving, depressed, insulted Oliver.

A year and a half after he had entered college, at the commencement of 1747, his father suddenly died. The scanty sums required for his support had been often intercepted, but this stopped them altogether. It may have been the least and most trifling loss connected with that sorrow: but 'squalid poverty,' relieved by occasional gifts, according to his small means, from uncle Contarine, by petty loans from Bryanton and Beatty, or by desperate pawning of his books of study, was Goldsmith's lot thenceforward. Yet even in the depths of that despair, arose the consciousness of faculties reserved for better fortune than continual contempt and failure. He would write Street-Ballads to save himself from actual starving; sell them at the *Rein Deer Repository* in Mounrath Court for five shillings a piece; and steal out of the college at night to hear them sung.

Happy night! worth all the dreary days! Hidden by some dusky wall, or creeping within darkling shadows of the ill-lighted streets, watched, and waited, this poor neglected sizar, for the only effort of his life which had not wholly failed. Few and dull, perhaps, the beggar's audience at first; more thronging, eager, and delighted, when he shouted the newly-gotten ware. Cracked enough his ballad-singing tones, I dare say; but harsh, discordant, loud or low, the sweetest music that this earth affords fell with them on the ear of Goldsmith. Gentle faces pleased, old men stopping by the way, young lads venturing a purchase with their last remaining farthing: why

here was A World in little, with its Fame at the sizar's feet! 'The greater world will be listening one day,' perhaps he muttered, as he turned with a lighter heart to his dull home.



It is said to have been a rare occurrence when the five shillings of the *Rein Deer Repository* reached home along with him. It was the most likely, when he was at his utmost need, to stop with some beggar on the road who might seem to him more destitute even than himself. Nor this only. The money gone: often, for the naked shivering wretch, had he slipped off a portion of the scanty clothes he wore, to patch a misery he could not



otherwise relieve. To one starving creature with five crying children, he gave at one time the blankets off his bed, and crept himself into the ticking for shelter from the cold.

It is not meant to insist on these things as examples of conduct. 'Sensibility is not Benevolence;' nor will this kind of agonised sympathy with distress, even when graced by an active self-denial, supply the solid duties or satisfactions of life. There are distresses, vast and remote, with which it behoves us still more to sympathise than with those, less really terrible, which only more attract us by intruding on our senses; and the conscience is too apt to discharge itself of the greater duty by instant and easy attention to the less. So much it is right to interpose when such anecdotes are told. To Goldsmith, all circumstances considered, they are honourable; and it is well to recollect them when the 'neglected opportunities' of his youth are spoken of. Doubtless there were better things to be done, by a man of stronger purpose. But the nature of men is not different from that of other living creatures. It gives the temper and disposition, but not the nurture and the culture. These Goldsmith never rightly had, except in such sort as he could himself provide; and now, assuredly, he had not found them in his college. 'That strong steady disposition which at 'once makes men great,' he avowed himself deficient in: but were other dispositions not worth the caring for? 'His imagination was too warm to relish the cold 'logic of Burgersdicius, or the dreary subtleties of



‘Smiglesius:’ but with nothing less cold or dreary might a warm imagination have been cherished? When, at the house of Burke, he talked these matters over in after years with Edmond Malone, he said that, though he made no figure in mathematics, he could have turned an ode of Horace with any of them. His tutor, Mr. Theaker Wilder, would as soon have had him turn a lathe.

This tutor, this reverend instructor of youth, was the same who, on one occasion in Dublin streets, sprang at a bound from the pavement on a hackney-coach which was passing at its fastest pace, and felled to the ground the driver, who had accidentally touched his face with the whip. So, mathematics being Mr. Theaker Wilder’s intellectual passion, the same strength, agility, and ferocity, which drove him into brawls with hackney-coachmen, he carried to the demonstrations of Euclid: and for this, all his life afterwards, even more than poet Gray, did poor Goldsmith wage war with Euclid. Never had he stood up in his class that this learned savage did not outrage and insult him. Having the misery to take malice for wit, the comic as well as tragic faculty of Mr. Wilder found endless recreation in the awkward, ugly, ‘ignorant,’ most sensitive young man. There was no pause or limit to the strife between them. The tutor’s brutality rose even to personal violence; the pupil’s shame and suffering hardened into reckless idleness; and the college career of Oliver Goldsmith was proclaimed a wretched failure.

Let us be thankful that it was no worse; and that

participation in a college riot was after all the highest of his college crimes. Twice indeed he was cautioned for neglecting even his Greek Lecture ; but then he was thrice commended for diligence in attending it ; and Doctor Kearney said he once got a prize at a Christmas examination in classics, but this seems doubtful. The college riot was the worst to allege against him ; and in this there was no very active sin. A scholar had been arrested, and the students resolved to take rough revenge. It was in the summer of 1747. They explored every bailiff's den in Dublin, found the offender by whom the arrest was made, brought him naked to the college pump, washed his delinquency thoroughly out of him, and were so elated with the triumph : and all law, all restraint, and all authority, looked so ludicrous in the person of their miserable drenched representative : that it was on the spot proposed to crown and consummate success by breaking open Newgate and making a general jail delivery. The *Black Dog*, as the prison was called, stood on the feeblest of legs, and with one small piece of artillery must have gone down for ever ; but the cannon was with the constable, the assailants were repulsed, and some townsmen attracted by the fray unhappily lost their lives. Five of the ringleaders were discovered and expelled the college ; and among five lesser offenders, who were publicly admonished for being present, ' aiding and abetting,' the name of Oliver Goldsmith occurs.

More galled by formal University admonition than by

Wilder's insults, and anxious to wipe out a disgrace that seemed not so undeserved, Goldsmith tried next month for a scholarship. He lost the scholarship, but got an exhibition: a very small exhibition truly, worth some thirty shillings, of which there were nineteen in number, and his was seventeenth in the list. It was trifling enough; but, little used to anything in the shape of even such a success, he let loose his unaccustomed joy in a small dancing party at his rooms, of humblest sort.

Wilder heard of the affront to discipline, suddenly showed himself in the middle of the festivity, and knocked down the poor triumphant exhibitor. It seemed an irretrievable disgrace. Goldsmith sold his books next day; got together a trifling sum; ran away from college; lingered fearfully about Dublin till his money was spent; and then, with a shilling in his pocket, set out for Cork. He did not know where he would have gone, he said, but he thought of America. For three days he lived upon the shilling; parted by degrees with nearly all his clothes to save himself from famine; and long afterwards told Sir Joshua Reynolds, that of all the exquisite meals he had ever tasted, the most delicious was a handful of grey peas given him by a girl at a wake after twenty-four hours' fasting. The vision of America sank before this reality, and he turned his feeble steps to Lissoy. His brother had private intimation of his state, went to him, clothed him, and carried him back to college. 'Something of a reconciliation,' say the biographers, was effected with the tutor.



Probably the tutor promised not to strike him to the ground again. Certainly no other improvement is on record. The insults, the merciless jests, the '*Oliver Goldsmith turned down,*' continue as before. We still trace him less by his fame in the class-room than his fines in the buttery-books. The change is in that greater submission of the victim which marks unsuccessful rebellion. He offers no resistance: makes no effort of any kind: sits, for the most part, indulging day-dreams. A Greek *Scapula* has been identified, which he used at this time, scrawled over with his writing. '*Free. Oliver Goldsmith;*'

'*I promise to pay, &c. Oliver Goldsmith;*' are among the autograph's musing shapes. Perhaps one half the day he was with Steele or Addison in parliament; perhaps the other half in prison, with Collins or with Fielding. We should be thankful, as I have said, that a time so dreary and dark bore no worse fruit than that. The shadow cast over his spirit, the uneasy sense of disadvantage which obscured his manners in later years, affected himself singly. But how many they are, whom such suffering, and such idleness, would have wholly and for ever corrupted. The spirit hardly less generous, cheerful, or self-supported than Goldsmith's, has been broken by them utterly.

He took his degree of Bachelor of Arts on the 27th February, 1749. He was lowest in the list. But it would be needless to recount the names that appear above his. The public merits of their owners ended with their college course, and oblivion has received them. Mr. Wilder and his pupil parted for ever: and when the friend of Burke, of Johnson, and of Reynolds, next heard the name of his college tyrant, a violent death had overtaken him in a dissolute brawl.

Goldsmith returned to his mother's house. There were great changes. She had removed, in her straitened circumstances, to a cottage at Ballymahon, 'in a corner of the road to Edgeworthstown.' His brother Henry had gone back to his father's original parsonage of Pallasmore; and, with his father's old pittance of forty pounds a year, was master of the village school. His eldest sister, Mrs. Hod-

son, for whom the sacrifice was made that impoverished the family resources, was mistress of the old house at Lissoy. All entreated Oliver to qualify himself for orders : and when they joined uncle Contarine's request, his own objection was withdrawn. But he is only twenty-one ; he must wait two years ; and they are passed at Ballymahon.

It is the sunny time between two dismal periods of his life. He has escaped one scene of misery ; another is awaiting him ; and what possibilities of happiness lie in the interval, it is his nature to seize and make the most of. He assists his brother Henry in the school ; runs household errands for his mother ; writes scraps of verses to please his uncle Contarine ; and, to please himself, gets cousin Bryanton and Tony Lumpkins of the district, with

wandering  
bearleaders  
of genteel-  
er sort, to  
meet at an  
old Inn by  
hismother's  
house, and  
be a club  
for story-  
telling, for  
an occasi-



onal game of whist, and for the singing of songs. First in these three accomplishments, great at Latin quota-

tions, as admirer of happy human faces greatest of all: Oliver presides. Cousin Bryanton had seen his disgrace in college, and thinks this a triumph indeed. So seems it to the hero of the triumph, on whose taste and manners, still only forming as yet in these sudden and odd extremes, many an amusing shade of contrast must have fallen in after-life, from the storms of Wilder's Class-room and the sunshine of George Conway's Inn. Thus the two years passed. In the daytime occupied, as I have said, in the village school; on the winter nights, at Conway's; in the evenings of summer, strolling up the Inny's banks to fish or play the flute, otter-hunting by the course of the Shannon, learning French from the Irish priests, or winning a prize for throwing the sledge-hammer at the fair of Ballymahon.

Two sunny years, with sorrowful affection long remembered: but hardly better than his college course to help him through the world. So much even occurred to himself when eight years were gone, and, in the outset of his London distresses, he turned back with wistful looks to Ireland. 'Unaccountable fondness,' he exclaimed, writing to his brother-in-law Hodson: 'Unaccountable that he should still have an affection for a place who never, when in it, received above common civility; who never brought anything out of it except his brogue and his blunders. What gives me a wish to see Ireland again? There are good company in Ireland? No. The conversation there is generally made up of a smutty toast or a bawdy song; the

‘vivacity supported by some humble cousin, who has just  
‘folly enough to earn his dinner. Then perhaps there’s  
‘more wit and learning among the Irish? Oh, Lord, no!  
‘There has been more money spent in the encouragement  
‘of the Padareen mare there one season, than given in  
‘rewards to learned men since the times of Usher. All  
‘their productions in learning amount to a translation,  
‘and a few tracts in divinity; and all their productions  
‘in wit, to just nothing at all.’ But perhaps the secret  
escapes without his knowledge, when in that same year he  
wrote to a more intimate friend: ‘I have disappointed  
‘your neglect,’ he said to Bryanton, ‘by frequently thinking  
‘of you. Every day do I remember the calm anecdotes of  
‘your life, from the fireside to the easy chair: recall the  
‘various adventures that first cemented our friendship: the  
‘school, the college, or the tavern: preside in fancy over  
‘your cards: and am displeas’d at your bad play when  
‘the rubber goes against you, though not with all that  
‘agony of soul as when I once was your partner.’ Let the  
truth then be said: and that it was the careless idleness of  
fireside and easy chair, that it was the tavern excitement  
of the game at cards, to which Goldsmith so wistfully  
looked back from those first hard London struggles.

It is not an example I would wish to inculcate; nor  
is this narrative written with that view. It were a dan-  
gerous attempt to try any such process for the chance  
of another Goldsmith. The truth is important to be kept  
in mind: that Genius is in no respect allied to these weak-



nesses, but, when unhappily connected with them, is in itself a means to avert their most evil consequence. Genius is the perfect health and victory of the mind: it may carry, as the Roman did, a slave in the chariot of its triumph, but this, to the just observer, will not seem the type of its own subjection, but of the tyrant's it has brought to slavery. Of the associates of Goldsmith in these happy, careless years, perhaps not one emerged to better fortune, and many sank to infinitely worse. 'Pray give my love to Bob Bryanton, and entreat 'him from me, not to drink,' is a passage from one of his later letters to his brother Henry. That habit he never suffered to overmaster himself: if the love of gaming to some trifling extent continued, it was at least the origin of many thoughts that may have saved others from like temptation: and if these irregular early years unsettled him for the pursuits his friends would have had him follow, and sent him wandering, with no pursuit, to mix among the poor and happy of other lands, he assuredly brought back some secrets both of poverty and happiness which were worth the finding, and, having paid for his errors by infinite personal privation, turned all the rest to the comfort and instruction of the world. There is a providence that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will; and to charming issues did the providence of Goldsmith's genius shape these rough-hewn times. It was not alone that it made him wise enough to know what infirmities he had, but it gave him the rarer wisdom of turning them to

entertainment and to profit. Through the pains and obstructions of his childhood, through the uneasy failures of his youth, through the desperate struggles of his manhood, it lighted him to those last uses of experience and suffering which have given him an immortal name.

And let it be observed, that this Ballymahon idleness could lay claim to a certain activity in one respect. It was always cheerful: no unimportant part of education, if heart and head are to go together. It will be well, indeed, when habits of cheerfulness are as much a part of formal instruction as habits of study, and when the foolish argument will be heard no longer, that these things are in Nature's charge. Nature asks help and culture in all things: will even yield to their solicitation, what would otherwise lie unknown. It was an acute remark of Goldsmith, in respect to literary efforts, that the habit of writing will give a man justness of thinking; and that he may get from it a mastery of manner, which holiday writers, though with ten times his genius, will find it difficult to equal. It is the same in temper as in mind. Habit comes in aid of all deficiencies. The reader will be therefore not unprepared to find, as well in these sunny Irish years, as in other parts of the apparently vagrant and idle career to be now described, some points of even general beneficial example.

The two years, then, are passed; and Oliver must apply for orders. 'For the clerical profession,' says Mrs. Hodson, 'he had no liking.' It seems little wonderful: having

seen, in his father and his brother, how much learning and labour were rewarded in the church by forty pounds a year. He had yet another, and to him perhaps a stronger motive; though I do not know if it has not been brought against him as an imputation of mere vanity or simplicity, that he once said 'he did not deem himself good enough for it.' But his friends, though not so resolute as at first, still advised him to this family profession. 'Our friends,' says the *Man in Black*, 'always advise, when they begin to despise us.' He made application to the Bishop of Elphin, and was refused: plucked: sent back as he went. The story is told in various ways, and it is hard to get at the truth. His sister says that his youth was the objection; it was a tradition 'in the diocese' that Mr. Theaker Wilder had told the Bishop of his college irregularities; Doctor Streaun fully believes, from rumours he picked up, that 'Mr. Noll's' offence was the having presented himself before his right reverence in scarlet breeches. The rejection is the only certainty. The *Man in Black*, it will be remembered, undergoes something of the same kind, remarking: 'My friends were now perfectly satisfied I was undone; and yet they thought it a pity, for one that had not the least harm in him, and was so very goodnatured.'

Uncle Contarine, however, was far from thinking this. He found a gentleman of his county, a Mr. Flinn, in want of a tutor, and recommended Oliver. The engagement continued for a year, and ended, as it was easy to antici-

pate, unsatisfactorily. His talent for card-playing as well as teaching, is said to have been put in requisition by Mr. Flinn; and the separation took place on Goldsmith's accusing one of the family of unfair play. But when he left this excellent Irish family and returned to Ballymahon, he had thirty pounds in his pocket, it is to be hoped the produce of fairer play; and was undisputed owner of a good plump horse. Within a few days, so furnished and mounted, he again left his mother's house (where, truth to say, things do not by this time seem to have been made very comfortable to him), and started for Cork with another floating vision of America. He returned in six weeks, with nothing in his pocket, and on a lean beast to which he had given the name of Fiddleback. The nature of his reception at Ballymahon appears from the simple remark he is said to have made to his mother. 'And now, 'my dear mother, after having 'struggled so hard to come home to you, I wonder you 'are not more rejoiced to see me.'



He afterwards addressed a clever though somewhat cavalier letter to her from his brother's house ; which is open to the objection that no copy exists in his handwriting, but has great internal evidence of his facility, grace, and humour. In substance it confessed that his intention was to have sailed for America : that he had gone to Cork for that purpose ; converted the horse which his mother prized so much higher than Fiddleback into cash ; paid for his passage in an American ship ; and, the wind threatening to detain them some days, had taken a little country excursion in the neighbourhood of the city : but that, the wind suddenly serving in his absence, his friend the captain never inquired after him, setting sail with as much indifference as if he had been on board. ' You know, mother,' he remarks, ' that no one can starve ' while he has money in his pocket : ' and, being reduced by the practice of this apophthegm to his last two guineas, he bought the generous beast, Fiddleback, for one pound fifteen, and with five shillings in his pocket turned homewards. Then came one of those sudden appeals to a sharp and painful susceptibility, when, as he afterwards described them to his brother, charitable to excess, he forgot the rules of justice, and placed himself in the situation of the wretch who thanked him for his bounty. Penniless in consequence, he bethought him of a college acquaintance on the road, to whose house he went. With exquisite humour he describes this most miserly acquaintance, who, to allay his desperate hunger, dilated on the

advantages of a diet of slops and set him down to a porringer of sour milk and a heel of musty cheese; and, being asked for the loan of a guinea, earnestly recommended the sale of Fiddleback, producing what he called a much better nag to ride upon which would cost neither price nor provender, in the shape of a stout oaken cudgel. His adventures ended a little more agreeably at last, however, at a more genial abode, where an acquaintance of the miser entertained him. He had 'two sweet girls to his daughters, who played enchantingly on the harpsichord; and yet it was but a melancholy pleasure I felt the first time I heard them; for, that being the first time also that either of them had touched the instrument since their mother's death, I saw the tears in silence trickle down their father's cheeks.'

Law was the next thing thought of, and the good Mr. Contarine came forward with fifty pounds. It seems a small sum wherewith to travel to Dublin and London, to defray expenses of entrance at inns of court, and to live upon till a necessary number of terms are eaten. But with fifty pounds young Oliver started: on a luckless journey. A Roscommon friend laid hold of him in Dublin, seduced him to play, and the fifty pounds he would have raised to a hundred, he reduced to fifty pence. In bitter shame, after great physical suffering, he wrote to his uncle, confessed, and was forgiven.

On return to Ballymahon, it is likely that his mother objected to receive him; since after this date we find

him living wholly with his brother. It was but for a short time; disagreement followed there too; and we see him next by Mr. Contarine's fireside, again talking literature to his good-natured uncle, writing new verses to please him (alleged copies of which are not sufficiently authentic to be quoted), and joining his flute to Miss Contarine's harpsichord. There was a sort of cold grandee of the family, Dean Goldsmith of Cloyne, who did not think it unbecoming his dignity to visit the good clergyman's parsonage now and then; and Oliver having made a remark which showed him no fool, the Dean gave it as his opinion to Mr. Contarine that his young relative would make an excellent medical man. The hint seemed a good one, and was the Dean's contribution to his young relative's fortune. The small purse was contributed by Mr. Contarine; and in the autumn of 1752, Oliver Goldsmith started for Edinburgh, medical student.

Anecdotes of amusing simplicity and forgetfulness in this new character, are more rife than notices of his course of study; and it is certain that any learned celebrity he may have got in the schools, paled an ineffectual fire before his amazing social repute, as inimitable teller of a humorous story and capital singer of Irish songs. But he was really fond of chemistry, and was remembered favourably by the celebrated Black; other well known fellow-students, as William Farr, and his whilome college acquaintance, Lauchlan Maclean, conceived a great regard for him, or at any rate afterwards boasted that they did;

certainly, of kind quaker Sleigh, known later as the eminent physician of that name, as painter Barry's first patron and Burke's friend, so much may without contradiction be affirmed; and it is therefore to be supposed that his eighteen months' residence in Edinburgh was, on the whole, not unprofitable. It had its mortifications, of course; for all his life had these. 'An ugly and a poor man is society only for himself; and such society the world lets me enjoy in great abundance:' 'Nor do I envy my dear Bob his blessings, while I may sit down and laugh at the world; and at myself, the most ridiculous object in it:' are among his expressions of half bitter, half good-natured candour, in a letter to his cousin Bryanton.

There is another confession in a later letter to his uncle, which touches him in a nearer point, and suggests more than it reveals. It would seem as though, to eke out his resources, he had, for some part of his time, accepted employment in a great man's house: probably as tutor. 'I have spent,' he says, 'more than a fortnight every second day at the Duke of Hamilton's; but it seems they like me more as a jester than as a companion; so I disdained so servile an employment.' To those with whom, on equal terms, he could be both jester and companion, Bryanton was charged with every kind of remembrance. 'You cannot send me much news from Ballymahon, but such as it is, send it all; everything you send will be agreeable to me. Has George Conway put up a sign



‘yet? or John Binley left off drinking drams? or Tom ‘Allen got a new wig?’ To the remarkably pleasant and whimsical satire of the Scotch he at the same time wrote to Bryanton, I do not refer, because in all the editions of his works, except the Scotch, it is commonly printed: but three letters to his uncle Contarine must have mention, the two less important of which, and the earliest in date, Mr. Prior discovered.

In the first, dated May, 1753, and in which he alludes to a description of himself by his uncle, as ‘the philosopher ‘who carries all his goods about him,’ he describes Munro as the one great professor, and the rest of the doctor-teachers as only less afflicting to their students than they must be to their patients. He makes humorous mention of a trip to the Highlands, for which he had hired a horse about the size of a ram, who ‘walked away (trot he ‘could not) as pensive as his master.’ Other passages show to what narrow limits he had brought his wants, and with how little he was cheerfully content, and full of gratitude.

There has been some harsh judgment of Goldsmith for money wasted on abortive professional undertakings: but the sacrifices were not great. Burke had an allowance of 200*l.* a-year for leisure to follow studies to which he never paid the least attention; and when his father anxiously expected to hear of his call to the bar, he might have heard, instead, of a distress which forced him to sell his books: yet no one thinks, and rightly, of exacting penalties from Burke on this ground. Poor Goldsmith’s supplies

were on the other hand small, irregular, uncertain, and in some two years at the furthest, exhausted altogether.

Here, in this letter to his uncle, he says that he has drawn for six pounds, and that his next draft, five months after this date, will be for but four pounds; pleading in extenuation of even these demands, that he has been obliged to buy everything since he came to Scotland, 'shirts not even excepted.' He professes himself pleased with his studies, and hopes that when he shall have heard Munro for another year, he may go 'to hear Albinus, the 'great professor at Leyden.' The whole of the letter gives evidence of a most grateful affection. In the second, written eight months later, where he describes his preparations for travel, it is not less apparent: 'Let me here 'acknowledge,' he says, 'the humility of the station in 'which you found me; let me tell how I was despised by 'most, and hateful to myself. Poverty, hopeless poverty, 'was my lot, and Melancholy was beginning to make me 'her own. When you . . . ' This good man did not live to know the entire good he had done, or that his own name would probably live with the memory of it as long as the English language lasted. 'Thou best of men!' exclaims his nephew in the third of these letters, to which I shall presently make larger reference, 'may Heaven 'guard and preserve you, and those you love!' It is the care of Heaven that actions worthy of itself should, in the doing, find reward: waiting not even on the thanks and prayers of such a heart as Goldsmith's. Another twenty

pounds are acknowledged on the eve of departure from Edinburgh, as the last he will ever draw for. It *was* the last, of which we have record. But Goldsmith had drawn his last breath before he forgot his uncle Contarine.

The old vicissitudes attended him at this new move in his game of life. Land rats and water rats were at his heels as he quitted Scotland. Bailiffs hunted him for security given to a fellow-student; and shipwreck he only escaped by a fortnight's imprisonment on a false political charge. Bound for Leyden, with characteristic carelessness or oddity he had secured his passage in a ship bound for Bourdeaux; but taken for a Jacobite in Newcastle-on-Tyne, and in Sunderland arrested by a tailor, the ship sailed on without him, and sank at the mouth of the Garonne. At last he got safe to the learned city; and wrote off to his uncle, among other sketches of character obviously meant to give him pleasure, what he thought of the three specimens of womankind he had now seen, out of Ireland. 'The Dutch is pale and fat,' he writes, 'the Scotch lean and ruddy: the one walks as if she were straddling after a go-cart, the other takes too masculine a stride. I shall not endeavour to deprive either country of its share of beauty; but I must say, that of all objects on this earth, an English farmer's daughter is most charming.'

In the same delightful letter he observingly corrects the vulgar notion of the better kind of Dutchman, and amusingly contrasts him with the downright Hollander.

“ He in everything imitates a Frenchman, but in his easy disengaged air, which is the result of keeping polite company. The Dutchman is vastly ceremonious, and is exactly perhaps what a Frenchman might have been in the reign of Louis XIV. Such are the better bred ; but the downright Hollander is one of the oddest figures in nature. Upon a head of lank hair he wears a half-cocked narrow hat laced with black ribbon, no coat, but seven waistcoats, and nine pair of breeches, so that his hips reach almost up to his arm-pits. This well-clothed vegetable is now fit to see company, or make love. But what a pleasing creature is the object of his appetite ? Why, she wears a large fur cap, with a deal of Flanders lace ; and for every pair of breeches he carries, she puts on two petticoats. A Dutch lady burns nothing about her phlegmatic admirer but his tobacco. You must know, sir, every woman carries in her hand a stove, with coals in it, which, when she sits, she snugs under her petticoats, and at this chimney, dozing Strephon lights his pipe.”

At the close of the letter, Scotland and Holland are contrasted : ‘ There, hills and rocks intercept every prospect ; here, it is all a continued plain. There, you might see a well dressed Duchess issuing from a dirty close, and here a dirty Dutchman inhabiting a palace. The Scotch may be compared to a tulip planted in dung ; but I never see a Dutchman in his own house but I think of a magnificent Egyptian temple dedicated to an ox.’ The playful tone of these passages, the amusing touch of satire, and the incomparably easy style, so compact and graceful, were announcements, properly first vouchsafed to the delight of good Mr. Contarine, of powers that were one day to give unfading delight to all the world.

Little is known of his pursuits at Leyden; but by this time he would seem to have applied himself, with little affectation of disguise, to general knowledge more than to professional. The one was available in immediate wants; the other pointed to but a distant hope which those very wants made, daily, more obscure; and the narrow necessities of self-help now crowded on him. His principal means of support were as a teacher; but the difficulties and disappointments of his own *Philosophic Vagabond*, when he went to Holland to teach the natives English, himself knowing nothing of Dutch, appear to have made it a sorry calling. Then, it is said, he borrowed; and again resorted to play, winning even largely but losing all he won; and it is at least certain that he encountered every form of distress. Unhappily, though he wrote many letters to Ireland, some of them described from recollection as compositions of singular ease and humour, all are lost. But Doctor Ellis, an Irish physician of eminence, and ex-student of Leyden, remembered his fellow-student when years had made him famous, and said: much, it may be confessed, in the tone of ex-post-facto prophecy: 'that it was a common subject of remark in the place, that in all the peculiarities of Goldsmith an elevation of mind was to be noted; a philosophical tone and manner; the feeling of a gentleman; and the language and information of a scholar.' Being much in want of the philosophy, it is well that he had it; though his last known scene in Leyden was less characteristic of that, than

of the gentle, grateful heart. Bent upon leaving that city, where he had now been nearly a year without an effort for a degree, he called upon Ellis and asked his assistance in some trifling sum. It was given; but as his Evil, or (some might say) his Good genius would have it, he passed a florist's garden on his return, and seeing some rare and high-priced flowers which his uncle Contarine, a floral enthusiast, had often spoken and been in search of, he ran in without other thought than of immediate pleasure to his kindest friend, bought a parcel of the roots, and sent them off to Ireland. He left Leyden next day, with a guinea in his pocket, but one shirt to his back, and a flute in his hand.

To understand what was probably passing in his mind at this curious point of his fortunes, *The Present State of Polite Learning*, the first literary piece which, a few years afterward, he published on his own account, will in some degree serve as a guide. The Danish writer, Baron de Holberg, was much talked of at this time, as a celebrated person recently dead. His career impressed Goldsmith. It was that of a man of obscure origin, to whom literature, other sources having failed, had given great fame and high worldly station. On the death of his father, Holberg had found himself involved 'in all that distress which is common among the poor, and of which the great have scarcely 'any idea.' But persisting in a determination to be *something*, he resolutely begged his learning and his bread, and so succeeded that 'a life begun in contempt and

‘poverty, ended in opulence and esteem.’ Goldsmith had his thoughts more especially fixed upon this career, when at Leyden, by the accident of its sudden close in that city. The desire of extensive travel, as his sister told Mr. Hancock, had been always a kind of passion with him; and with precisely the same means of indulging it, so it had been with Holberg. ‘His ambition,’ I turn again to the *Polite Learning*, ‘was not to be restrained, or his thirst of knowledge satisfied, until he had seen the world. Without money, recommendations, or friends, he undertook to set out upon his travels, and make the tour of Europe on foot. A good voice, and a trifling skill in music, were the only finances he had to support an undertaking so extensive; so he travelled by day, and at night sung at the doors of peasants’ houses to get himself a lodging. In this manner, while yet very young, Holberg passed through France, Germany, and Holland.’ And with exactly the same resources, still also very young, Goldsmith quitted Leyden, bent upon the travel which his *Traveller* has made immortal.

It was in February 1755. For the exact route he took, the nature of his adventures, and the course of thought they suggested, it is necessary to resort for the most part to his published writings. His letters of the time have perished. It was notorious in the Reynolds’ circle, that the wanderings of the *Philosophic Vagabond* had been suggested by his own, and he often admitted at that time, to various friends, the accuracy of special details. If he did

not make more open confession, it was to please the book-sellers only; who could not bear that any one so popular with their customers as Doctor Goldsmith had become, should lie under the horrible imputation of so deplorable a poverty. 'Countries wear very different appearances,' he had written in the first edition of the *Polite Learning*, 'to travellers of different circumstances. A man who is whirled through Europe in a post-chaise, and the pilgrim who walks the grand tour on foot, will form very different conclusions. Haud inexpertus loquor.' In the second edition, the 'haud inexpertus loquor' disappeared; but the experience had been already set down in the *Vicar of Wakefield*.

Louvain attracted him of course, as he passed through Flanders; and here, according to his first biographers, he took the degree of Medical Bachelor, which, as early as 1763, is found in one of the Dodsley agreements appended to his name. Though this is hardly likely, it is yet quite possible. The records of Louvain University were destroyed in the revolutionary wars, and the means of proof or disproof lost; but it is improbable that any false assumption of a medical degree would have passed without question among the distinguished friends of his later life, even if it escaped the exposure of his active enemies. Certain it is at any rate, that he made some stay at Louvain; became acquainted with its professors; and informed himself of its modes of study. 'I always forgot the meanness of my circumstances when I could



‘converse upon such subjects.’ Some little time he also seems to have passed at Brussels. At Maestricht, there is trace of his having examined an extensive cavern, or stone quarry, at that time much visited by travellers. And it was doubtless at Antwerp (a ‘fortification in Flanders’) that he saw the maimed, deformed, chained, yet cheerful slave, to whom he refers in that charming essay wherein he argues that happiness and pleasure are in ourselves, and not in the objects offered for our amusement. He did not travel to see that all was barren; he did not merely outface the poverty, the hardship, the fatigue; he made them his servants, and ministers to entertainment and wisdom.

Before he passed through Flanders good use had been made of his flute; and when he came to the poorer provinces of France, he found it greatly serviceable. ‘I had ‘some knowledge of music,’ says the *Vagabond*, ‘with a ‘tolerable voice; I now turned what was once my amusement into a present means of subsistence. I passed ‘among the harmless peasants of Flanders, and among ‘such of the French as were poor enough to be very ‘merry; for I ever found them sprightly in proportion ‘to their wants. Whenever I approached a peasant’s ‘house towards night-fall, I played one of my most ‘merry tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging, ‘but subsistence for the next day. I once or twice ‘attempted to play for people of fashion; but they always ‘thought my performance odious, and never rewarded me ‘even with a trifle.’ In plain words, he begged, as

Holberg had done ; supported by his cheerful spirit, and the thought that Holberg's better fate might one day yet be his. Not, we may be sure, the dull round of professional labour, but intellectual distinction, popular fame, were now within the sphere of Goldsmith's vision : and what these will enable a man joyfully to endure, he afterwards bore witness to. 'The perspective of life brightens ' upon us when terminated by objects so charming. ' Every intermediate image of want, banishment, or sorrow, receives a lustre from their distant influence. With ' these in view, the patriot, philosopher, and poet, have ' looked with calmness on disgrace and famine, and rested ' on their straw with cheerful serenity.' Straw, doubtless, was his own peasant-lodging often ; but from it the wanderer rose, refreshed and hopeful, and bade the melody and sport resume, and played with a new delight to the music of enchanting verse already dancing in his brain.

Gay sprightly land of mirth and social ease,  
 Pleas'd with thyself, whom all the world can please,  
 How often have I led thy sportive choir,  
 With tuneless pipe, beside the murmuring Loire !  
 Where shading elms along the margin grew,  
 And, freshen'd from the wave, the zephyr flew ;  
 And haply, though my harsh touch falt'ring still,  
 But mock'd all tune, and marr'd the dancer's skill ;  
 Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,  
 And dance, forgetful of the noon-tide hour.  
 Alike all ages. Dames of ancient days  
 Have led their children through the mirthful maze,  
 And the gay grandsire, skill'd in gestic lore,  
 Has friek'd beneath the burden of threescore.  
 So blest a life these thoughtless realms display,  
 Thus idly busy rolls their world away :

Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear,  
For honour forms the social temper here.  
Honour, that praise which real merit gains  
Or e'en imaginary worth obtains,  
Here passes current ; paid from hand to hand,  
It shifts in splendid traffic round the land ;  
From courts to camps, to cottages it strays,  
And all are taught an avarice of praise.  
They please, are pleased ; they give to get esteem ;  
Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.

Arrived in Paris, he rested some brief space, and, for the time, a sensible improvement is to be observed in his resources. This is not easily explained; for, as will appear a little later in our history, many applications to Ireland of this date remained altogether without answer, and a sad fate had fallen suddenly on his best friend. But in subsequent communication with his kinsman Hodson, he remarked that there was hardly a kingdom in Europe in which he was not a debtor; and in Paris, if anywhere, he would find many hearts made liberal by the love of learning. His early memoir writers assert with confidence, that in at least some small portion of these travels he acted as companion to a young man of large fortune (nephew to a pawnbroker, and articled-clerk to an attorney); and there are passages in the *Philosophic Vagabond*, which, if they did not themselves suggest this, would tend to bear it out. 'I was to be the young gentleman's governor, ' with a proviso that he should always be permitted to ' govern himself. He was heir to a fortune of two hundred thousand pounds, left him by an uncle in the West ' Indies; and all his questions on the road were, how

‘ much money could be saved. Such curiosities as could be seen for nothing, he was ready enough to look at; but if the sight of them was to be paid for, he usually asserted that he had been told they were not worth seeing.’

Poor Goldsmith could not have profited much by so thrifty a young gentleman, but he certainly seems to have attended the fashionable chemical lectures of the day (‘ I have witnessed as bright a circle of beauty at the lectures of Rouelle as gracing the court of Versailles ’); to have seen and admired the celebrated actress Mademoiselle Clairon (of whom he speaks in an essay); and to have had leisure to look quietly around him, and form certain grave and settled conclusions on the political and social state of France. He says, in his *Animated Nature*, that he never walked about the environs of Paris that he did not look upon the immense quantity of game running almost tame on every side of him, as ‘ a badge of the slavery of the people.’ What they wished him to observe as an object of triumph, he added, he regarded with a secret dread and compassion. Nor was it the badge of slavery that alone arrested his attention. If on every side he saw this, he saw liberty at but a little distance beyond, and predicted, in words that are really very remarkable, the issue which was so terrible and yet so glorious. ‘ As the Swedes are making concealed approaches to despotism, the French, on the other hand, are imperceptibly vindicating themselves into freedom.

‘ When I consider that these parliaments, the members of  
‘ which are all created by the court and the presidents of  
‘ which can only act by immediate direction, presume  
‘ even to mention privileges and freedom, who till of late  
‘ received directions from the throne with implicit humility;  
‘ when this is considered, I cannot help fancying that the  
‘ genius of Freedom has entered that kingdom in disguise.  
‘ If they have but three weak monarchs more successively  
‘ on the throne, the mask will be laid aside, and the  
‘ country will certainly once more be free.’ Some thirty  
years after this was written, and when the writer had been  
fifteen years in his grave, the crash of the falling Bastille  
resounded over Europe.

Before Goldsmith quitted Paris, he is said by Mr. Prior to have seen and become known to Voltaire. But at Paris this could not have been. The great wit was then self-exiled from the capital, which he had not seen from the luckless hour in which he accepted the invitation of Frederick of Prussia. Mr. Prior speaks, it is quite true, on Goldsmith’s own authority; but the passage is loosely written, does not appear in a work which bore the writer’s name, and may either have been tampered with by others, or even mistakenly set down by himself in confusion of memory. The error does not vitiate the statement in an integral point, since it can hardly be doubted, I think, that the meeting actually took place. The time when Goldsmith passed through the Genevese territory, is the time when Voltaire had settled himself, in greater quiet

than he had known for years, in his newly-purchased house of *Les Delices*. He is, in a certain sort, admitted President of the European Intellectual Republic. He is, from his president's chair, laughing at his own follies; laughing heartily at the kings of his acquaintance; particularly and loudly laughing at Frederick and his '*Œuvres des Poésies*.' It is the time of all others when, according to his own letters, he is resolved to have, on every occasion and in every shape, 'the society of agreeable and clever people.' Goldsmith, flute in hand, or Goldsmith, learned and poor companion to a rich young fool; Goldsmith, in whatever character, yearning to literature, and its fame, and its aw-inspiring professors; would not be near *Les Delices* without finding easy passage to its illustrious owner. By whatever chance or design, there at any rate he seems to have been. A large party was present, and conversation turned upon the English: of whom, as he afterwards observed in a letter to the *Public Ledger*, Goldsmith recollected Voltaire to have remarked, that at the battle of Dettingen they exhibited prodigies of valour, but lessened their well-bought conquest by lessening the merit of those they had conquered.

In a *Life of Voltaire* afterwards begun, but not finished, in one of the magazines of the day, he recalled this conversation in greater detail to illustrate the general manner of the famous Frenchman. 'When he was warmed in discourse, and had got over a hesitating manner which sometimes he was subject to, it was rapture to hear him. His meagre visage seemed insensibly to gather beauty,

‘every muscle in it had meaning, and his eye beamed with unusual brightness.’ As among the persons present, though this might be open to question if anything of great strictness were involved, the names are used of the vivid and noble talker, Diderot, and of Fontenelle, then on the verge of the grave that waited for him nigh a hundred years. The last, Goldsmith says, reviled the English in everything; the first, with unequal ability, defended them; and, to the surprise of all, Voltaire long continued



silent. At last he was roused from his reverie; the new life pervaded his frame; he flung himself into an animated

defence of England; strokes of the finest raillery fell thick and fast on his antagonist; and he spoke almost without intermission for three hours. 'I never was so much 'charmed,' he added; 'nor did I ever remember so 'absolute a victory as he gained in this dispute.'

A worshipper at the footstool was Goldsmith here, and Voltaire was on the throne; yet it is possible that when the great Frenchman heard in later years the name of the celebrated Englishman, he may have remembered this night at *Les Delices*, and the enthusiasm of his young admirer. He may have recalled, with a smile for its fervent zeal, the pale, somewhat sad face, with its two great wrinkles between the eyebrows, but redeemed from ugliness or contempt by its kind expression of simplicity, as his own was by its wonderful intellect and look of unutterable mockery. For though, when they met, Voltaire was upwards of sixty-one, and Goldsmith not twenty-seven, it happened that when the Frenchman's popularity returned, and all the fashion and intellect of Paris were again at the feet of the Philosopher of Ferney; the Johnsons Burkes, Gibbons, Wartons, Sheridans, and Reynoldses, of England, were discussing the inscription for the marble tomb of the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield*.

The lecture rooms of Germany are so often referred to in his prose writings, that, as he passed to Switzerland, he must have taken them in his way. In the *Polite Learning*, one is painted admirably: its Nego, Probo, and Distinguo, growing gradually loud till denial, approval,



and distinction are altogether lost ; till disputants grow warm, moderator is unheard, audience take part in the debate, and the whole hall buzzes with erroneous philosophy. Passing into Switzerland, he saw Schaffhausen frozen quite across, and the water standing in columns where the cataract had formerly fallen. His *Animated Nature*, in which this is noticed, contains also masterly descriptions, from his own experience, of the wonders that present themselves to the traveller over lofty mountains ; and he adds that ‘ nothing can be finer or more exact than ‘ Mr. Pope’s description of a traveller straining up the Alps.’ Geneva was his resting-place in Switzerland ; but he visited Basle and Berne ; ate a ‘ savoury ’ dinner on the top of the Alps ; flushed woodcocks on Mount Jura ; wondered to see the sheep in the valleys, as he had read of them in the old pastoral poets, following the sound of the shepherd’s pipe of reed ; and, poet himself at last, sent off to his brother Henry eighty lines of verse, which were afterwards published in the *Traveller*.

Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,  
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend ;  
Blest be that spot, where cheerful guests retire  
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire ;  
Blest that abode, where want and pain repair,  
And every stranger finds a ready chair ;  
Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crown’d,  
Where all the ruddy family around  
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,  
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale ;  
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,  
And learn the luxury of doing good.

Remembering his brother's humble kindly life, he had set in pleasant contrast before him the weak luxuriance of Italy, and the sturdy enjoyment of the rude Swiss home.

My soul, turn from them ; turn we to survey  
 Where rougher climes a nobler race display,  
 Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansion tread,  
 And force a churlish soil for scanty bread :  
 No product here the barren hills afford,  
 But man and steel, the soldier and his sword ;  
 No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,  
 But winter lingering chills the lap of May. . .  
 Yet still, even here, Content can spread a charm,  
 Redress the clime, and all its rage disarm.  
 Though poor the peasant's hut, his feast though small,  
 He sees his little lot the lot of all ;  
 Sees no contiguous palace rear its head  
 To shame the meanness of his humble shed. . .  
 Cheerful at morn, he wakes from short repose,  
 Breathes the keen air and carols as he goes. . .  
 At night returning, every labour sped,  
 He sits him down the monarch of a shed ;  
 Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys  
 His children's looks, that brighten at the blaze ;  
 While his loved partner, boastful of her hoard,  
 Displays her cleanly platter on the board :  
*And haply, too, some pilgrim, thither led,  
 With many a tale repays the nightly bed.*  
 Thus every good his native wilds impart,  
 Imprints the patriot passion on his heart ;  
 And e'en those ills that round his mansion rise  
 Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.  
 Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,  
 And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms ;  
 And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,  
 Clings close and closer to the mother's breast,  
 So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,  
 But bind him to his native mountains more.

Descending into Piedmont he observed the floating beehouses of which he speaks so pleasantly in the *Animated Nature*. After this, proofs of his having seen Florence, Verona, Mantua, and Milan, are apparent; and in Carinthia the incident occurred with which his famous couplet has too hastily reproached a people, when, sinking with fatigue, after a long day's toilsome walk, he was turned from a peasant's hut at which he implored a lodging. At Padua he is supposed to have stayed some little time; and here, it has been asserted, though in this case also the official records are lost, he received his degree. Here, or at Louvain, or at some other of these foreign universities where he always boasted himself hero in the disputations to which his *Philosophic Vagabond* refers, there can hardly be a question that the degree, a very simple and accessible matter at any of them, was actually conferred. Of his having also taken a somewhat close survey of those countless academic institutions of Italy, in the midst of which Italian learning at this time withered, evidence is not wanting; and he always thoroughly discriminated the character of that country and its people.

But small the bliss that sense alone bestows,  
And sensual bliss is all the nation knows.  
In florid beauty groves and fields appear,  
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.

It is a hard struggle to return to England; but his steps are now bent that way. 'My skill in music,' says the *Vagabond*, 'could avail me nothing in Italy, where

‘every peasant was a better musician than I: but by this  
 ‘time I had acquired another talent which answered my  
 ‘purpose as well, and this was a skill in disputation. In  
 ‘all the foreign universities and convents there are, upon  
 ‘certain days, philosophical theses maintained against every  
 ‘adventitious disputant; for which, if the champion opposes  
 ‘with any dexterity, he can claim a gratuity in money, a  
 ‘dinner, and a bed for one night. In this manner, then,  
 ‘I fought my way towards England; walked along from  
 ‘city to city; examined mankind more nearly; and, if I  
 ‘may so express it, saw both sides of the picture.’ It  
 was on the 1st of February, 1756, that Oliver Goldsmith  
 stepped upon the shore at Dover, and stood again among  
 his countrymen.

Stern o'er each bosom Reason holds her state  
 With daring aims irregularly great;  
 Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,  
 I see the lords of human kind pass by!

The comfort of seeing it must have been about all the  
 comfort. At this moment, there is little doubt, he had  
 not a single farthing in his pocket; and from the Lords of  
 Human Kind it was much more difficult to get one, than  
 from the careless good-humoured peasants of France or  
 Flanders. In the struggle of ten days or a fortnight  
 which it took him to get to London, there is reason to  
 suspect that he attempted a comic performance in a country  
 barn; and, at one of the towns he passed, had implored  
 to be hired in an apothecary's shop. In the middle of

February he was wandering without friend or acquaintance, without the knowledge or comfort of even one kind face, in the lonely, terrible, LONDON Streets.



He thought he might find employment as an usher ; and there is a dark uncertain kind of story, of his getting a bare subsistence this way for some few months, under a feigned name : which had involved him in a worse distress but for the judicious silence of the Dublin Doctor (Radcliffe), to whom he had been suddenly called on to apply for a character, and whose good-humoured acquiescence in his private appeal saved him from suspicion of imposture.

Goldsmith showed his gratitude by a long, and, it is said, a most delightful letter to Radcliffe, descriptive of his travels; now unhappily lost. He also wrote again to his more familiar Irish friends, but his letters were again unanswered. He went among the London apothecaries, and asked them to let him spread plaisters for them, pound in their mortars, run with their medicines: but they, too, asked him for a character, and he had none to give. At last a chemist of the name of Jacob took compassion upon him; and the late Conversation Sharp used to point out a shop at the corner of Monument Yard on Fish Street Hill, shown to him in his youth as this benevolent Mr. Jacob's. Ten or twelve years later, Goldsmith startled a brilliant circle at Sir Joshua's with an anecdote of 'When I lived among the beggars of Axe Lane,' just as Napoleon, fifty years later, appalled the party of crowned heads at Dresden with his story of 'When I was a lieutenant in the regiment of La Fère.' The experience with the beggars will of course date before that social elevation of mixing and selling drugs on Fish Street Hill.

Thus employed, he met one day an old fellow-student of the Edinburgh time. It was Sunday, and he was in the best clothes he had, but the friend of two years gone did not know him. 'Such,' he said, in relating this, 'is the tax the unfortunate pay to poverty.' He did not fail to leave to the unfortunate the lessons they should be taught by it. Doctor Sleight (Foote's *Doctor Sligo*, honorably named in an earlier page of this narrative), recol-

lected him at last; and, added Goldsmith, 'I found his heart as warm as ever.' With the help of this warm heart, he now rose from the apothecary's drudge to be physician, 'in a humble way,' in Bankside, Southwark. It was not a thriving business: Poor physician to the Poor: but it seemed a change for the better, and hope was strong in him.

An old Irish acquaintance and school-fellow (Beatty) met him in the streets. He was in a suit of green and gold, miserably old and tarnished; his shirt and neck-cloth appeared to have been worn at least a fortnight; but he said he was practising physic, and doing very well! It is hard to confess failure to one's school-fellow.

Our next glimpse, though not more satisfactory, is more professional. The green and gold have faded quite out, into a rusty full-trimmed black suit: the pockets of which, like those of the poet in Garrick's farce, overflow with papers. The coat is second-hand velvet, legacy of a more successful brother of the craft; the cane, the wig, have served more fortunate owners; and the humble practitioner of Bankside is feeling the pulse of a patient humbler than himself, whose courteous entreaties to be allowed to relieve him of the hat he keeps pressed over his heart, he more courteously but firmly declines. Beneath the hat is a large patch in the rusty velvet, which he thus conceals.

But he cannot conceal the starvation which again threatens. Even the poor printer's-workman he attends, can see how hardly in that respect it goes with him; and finds courage one day to suggest that his master has been

kind to clever men before now, has visited Mr. Johnson in spunging-houses, and might be serviceable to a poor



physician. For his master is no less than Mr. Samuel Richardson, of Salisbury Court and Parsons Green, printer, and author of *Clarissa*. The hint is successful: and Goldsmith, appointed reader and corrector to the press in Salisbury Court; admitted now and then to the parlour of Richardson himself; grimly smiled upon by its chief literary ornament, great poet of the day, the author of the *Night Thoughts*; sees hope in Literature once more.



He begins a tragedy. With what modest expectation; with what cheerful, simple-hearted deference to critical objection; another of his Edinburgh fellow-students will relate to us.

“From the time of Goldsmith’s leaving Edinburgh, in the year 1754,” says Dr. Farr, “I never saw him till 1756, when I was in London, attending the hospitals and lectures. He called upon me one morning before I was up, and on my entering the room, I recognised my old acquaintance, dressed in a rusty black suit with his pockets full of papers. After we had finished our breakfast, he drew from his pocket a part of a tragedy, which he said he had brought for my correction; in vain I pleaded inability; he began to read, and *every part on which I expressed a doubt as to the propriety, was immediately blotted out.* I then more earnestly entreated him not to trust to my judgment, but to the opinion of persons better qualified to decide on dramatic composition; on which he told me he had submitted his production, so far as he had written, to Mr. Richardson, the author of *Clarissa*; when I peremptorily declined offering another criticism upon the performance. The name and subject of the tragedy have unfortunately escaped my memory; neither do I recollect with exactness how much he had written, though I am inclined to believe he had not completed the third act. I never heard whether he afterwards finished it. In this visit, I remember his relating a strange Quixotic scheme he had in contemplation, of going to decipher the inscriptions on the *Written Mountains*; though he was altogether ignorant of Arabic, or the language in which they might be supposed to be written. The salary of £300 per annum, which had been left for the purpose, was the temptation.”

Temptation indeed! The head may well be full of projects of any kind, when the pockets are only full of papers. But

not, alas, to decipher inscriptions on the *Written Mountains*; only to preside over pot-hooks at Peckham; was doomed to be the lot of Goldsmith. One Doctor Milner kept a school there; his son was among these young Edinburgh students come up to their London examinations; and thus it happened that the office of Assistant at the Peckham Academy befell. 'All my ambition now is to live,' he said, in the words of his *Vagabond*; and was installed. This was about the beginning of 1757. An attempt has been made to show that it was an earlier year, but on grounds too unsafe to oppose to known dates in the life. The good people of Peckham have also cherished traditions of *Goldsmith House*, as what was once the school is now fondly designated: which may not safely be admitted here. Broken window-panes have been religiously kept, for the supposed treasure of his hand-writing; and old gentlemen, once Doctor Milner's scholars, have claimed, against every reasonable evidence, the honour of having been whipped by the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield*. But nothing is with certainty known, save what the school-master's daughter has related.

At the end of the century Miss Milner was still alive, and told what she recollected of their old usher. He was very good-natured, she said; played all kinds of tricks on the servants and the boys, of which he had no lack of return in kind; told entertaining stories; and amused every body with his flute. With his small salary, he was always in advance. It went for the most part, Miss Milner

added, on the day he received it; in relief to beggars, and in sweetmeats for the boys. Her mother would say to him at last: 'You had better, Mr. Goldsmith, let me take care of your money, as I do for some of the young gentlemen:' to which he would good-humouredly answer, 'In truth, madam, there is equal need.'



This is putting the best face upon the matter, as it was natural Miss Milner should. But in sober fact, it was even his bitterest time, this Peckham time. He could think in after years of his beggary, but not of his slavery, without shame. 'Oh, that is all a holiday at Peckham,' said one of the Langtons carelessly, in the common proverbial phrase: but Goldsmith reddened, and asked if it was meant to offend him. Nor can we fail to recall the tone in which he afterwards alluded to this mode of life. When, two years later, he tried to persuade people that a schoolmaster was of more importance in the state than to be neglected and left to starve, he described what he had known too well. 'The usher is generally the laughing-stock of the school. Every trick is played upon him; the oddity of his manner, his dress, or his language, is a fund of eternal ridicule; the master himself now and then

'cannot avoid joining in the laugh ; and the poor wretch, 'eternally resenting this ill usage, lives in a state of war 'with all the family. This is a very proper person, is it 'not, to give children a relish for learning? They must 'esteem learning very much, when they see its professors 'used with such ceremony?' So, too, and with more direct reason, was it understood to refer to the Peckham discomforts, when he talked of the poor usher obliged to sleep in the same bed with the French teacher, 'who 'disturbs him for an hour every night in papering and 'filleting his hair ; and stinks worse than a carrion with 'his rancid pomatums, when he lays his head beside him 'on the bolster.' Who will not think, moreover, of George Primrose and his cousin? 'Ay!' cried he, 'this 'is indeed a very pretty career that has been chalked out 'for you. I have been an usher at a boarding-school 'myself ; and may I die by an anodyne necklace, but I 'had rather be under-turnkey in Newgate. I was up 'early and late : I was browbeat by the master, hated for 'my ugly face by the mistress, worried by the boys.' Finally, in the only anecdote that rests on other safe authority than Miss Milner's, there is quite sufficient reason in fact, for adoption of the same tone.

Mr. Samuel Bishop, whose sons have had distinction in the church, was a Peckham scholar, and Mr. Prior tells the story as he had it from one of the sons. 'When 'amusing his younger companions during play hours 'with the flute, and expatiating on the pleasures derived

‘from music, in addition to its advantages in society as a gentlemanlike acquirement, a pert boy, looking at his situation and personal disadvantages with something of contempt, rudely replied to the effect that *he* surely could not consider himself a gentleman: an offence which, though followed by chastisement, disconcerted and pained him extremely.’ That the pain of this period of his life could yet on occasion be forgotten, in what a happy nature found better worth remembering, may be gathered from the same authority. When the despised usher was a celebrated man, young Bishop, walking in London with his newly-married wife, met his old teacher. Goldsmith recognised him instantly, as a lad he had been fond of at Peckham, and embraced him with delight. His joy increased when Mr. Bishop made known his wife; but the introduction had not unsettled the child’s image in the kind man’s heart. It was still the boy before him; still Master Bishop; the lad he used to cram with fruit and sweetmeats, to the judicious horror of the Milners. ‘Come, my boy,’ he said, as his eye fell upon a basket-woman standing at the corner of the street, ‘Come, Sam, I am delighted to see you. I must treat you to something. What shall it be? Will you have some apples?’ ‘Sam,’ added Goldsmith, suddenly, ‘have you seen my picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds? Have you seen it, Sam? Have you got an engraving?’ Not to appear negligent of the rising fame of his old preceptor, says the teller of the story, ‘my father replied that he had not

'yet procured it; he was just furnishing his house; but he had fixed upon the spot the print was to occupy as soon as he was ready to receive it.' 'Sam,' returned Goldsmith with some emotion, 'if your picture had been published, I should not have waited an hour without having it.'

But let me not anticipate these better days. He is still the Peckham usher, and humble sitter at Doctor Milner's board; where it chanced that Griffiths the bookseller, who had started the *Monthly Review* eight years before, dined one April day. Doctor Milner was one of his contributors; there was opposition in the field; Archibald Hamilton the bookseller, with the powerful aid of Smollett, had set afloat the *Critical Review*; the talk of the table turned upon this, and some remarks by the usher attracted the attention of Griffiths. He took him aside: 'Could he furnish a few specimens of criticism?' The offer was accepted, and the specimens; and before the close of April, 1757, Goldsmith was bound by Griffiths in an agreement for one year. He was to leave Doctor Milner's, to board and lodge with the bookseller, to have a small regular salary, and to devote himself to the *Monthly Review*.

One sees something like the transaction in the pleasant talk of George Primrose. "Come, I see you are a lad of spirit and some learning, what do you think of commencing author, like me? You have read in books, no doubt, of men of genius starving at the trade: at

“ present I’ll show you forty very dull fellows about town  
“ that live by it in opulence. All honest, jog-trot men,  
“ who go on smoothly and dully, and write history and  
“ politics, and are praised : men, sir, who, had they been  
“ bred cobblers, would all their lives have only mended  
“ shoes, but never made them.” Finding that there was  
‘ no great degree of gentility affixed to the character of an  
‘ usher, I resolved to accept his proposal ; and having the  
‘ highest respect for literature, hailed the *antiqua mater*  
‘ of Grub Street with reverence. I thought it my glory  
‘ to pursue a track which Dryden and Otway trod before  
‘ me.’ The difference of fact and fiction here will be,  
that glory had nothing to do with this matter. Griffiths  
and glory were not to be thought of together. The sor-  
rowful road seemed the last that was left to him : and he  
entered it.

On this track, then, taken by few successfully, taken  
happily by few, though not on that account the less in  
every age the choice of men of genius, we see Goldsmith,  
in his twenty-ninth year, without choice, in sheer and bare  
necessity, launched for the first time. The prospect of  
unusual gloom might have damped the ardour of a more  
cheerful adventurer.

FIELDING had died in shattered hope and fortune, at  
what should have been his prime of life, three years before.  
Within the next two years, poor and mad, COLLINS was  
fated to descend to his early grave. SMOLLETT was toughly  
fighting for his every-day’s existence. JOHNSON, within

some half dozen months, had been tenant of a spunging-house. No man throve that was connected with letters unless connected with their trade and merchandise as well, and, like RICHARDSON, could print as well as write books.

‘Had some of those,’ cried Smollett, in his bitterness, ‘who were pleased to call themselves my friends, been at any pains to deserve the character, and told me ingenuously what I had to expect in the capacity of an author, when I first professed myself of that venerable fraternity, I should, in all probability, have spared myself the incredible labour and chagrin I have since undergone.’ ‘I don’t think,’ said Burke, in his first London letter to his Irish friends, written seven years before this date, ‘there is as much respect paid to a man of letters on this side the water as you imagine. I don’t find that Genius, the  
‘*rathe primrose, which forsaken dies,*’  
‘is patronized by any of the nobility. Writers of the first talents are left to the capricious patronage of the public. A man will make more by the figures of arithmetic than the figures of rhetoric, unless he can get into the trade wind, and then he may sail secure over Pactolean sands.’

It was, in truth, one of those times of Transition which press hardly on all whose lot is cast in them. The patron was gone; and the public had not come. The seller of books had as yet exclusive command over the destiny of those who wrote them; and he was difficult of access; without



certain prospect of the trade wind, hard to move. 'The 'shepherd in *Virgil*,' said Johnson to Lord Chesterfield, 'grew at last acquainted with love, and found him a native 'of the rocks.' Nor had adverse circumstances been without their effect upon the literary character itself. Covered with the blanket of Boyse, and sheltered by the night-cellar of Savage, it had forfeited less honour and self-respect than as the paid client of the ministries of Walpole and Henry Pelham. As long as its political services were acknowledged by offices in the state ; as long as the coarse wit of Prior could be paid by an embassy, or the delicate humour of Addison win its way to a secretaryship ; while Steele and Congreve, Swift and Gay, sat at ministerial tables, and were of account in cabinet councils ; its slavery was not less real than in later years, yet all externally went well with it. Though even flat apostacy, as in the case of Parnell, might in those days be the claim of literature to worldly esteem, still it *was* esteemed by the crowd, and had the rank and consideration which worldly means could give to it. But when another state of things succeeded ; when politicians had too much shrewdness to despise the helps of the pen, and too little intellect to honour its claims and influence ; when it was thought that to strike at its dignity was to command its more complete subservience ; when corruption in its grosser forms had become chief director of political intrigue, and it was less the statesman's office to wheedle a vote than the minister's business to give hard cash in

return for it ; Literature, or the craft so called, was thrust from the House of Commons into its lobbies and waiting-rooms, and ordered to exchange the dignity of the council-table for the comforts of the great man's kitchen.

The order did not of necessity make the Man of Genius a servant or a parasite ; its sentence upon him was simply, that he must descend in the social scale, peradventure starve. But though it could not disgrace or degrade him, it called a class of writers into existence whose degradation and disgrace reacted upon him ; who flung a stigma on his pursuits, and made the name of man-of-letters the synonyme for dishonest hireling. Of the fifty thousand pounds which the Secret Committee found to have been expended by Walpole's ministry on daily scribblers for their daily bread, not a sixpence was received, either then or when the Pelhams afterwards followed the example, by a writer whose name is now enviably known. All went to the Guthries, the Amhursts, the Arnalls, the Ralphs, and the Oldmixons. A Cook was pensioned, a Fielding solicited Walpole in vain. What the man of genius received, unless the man of rank had wisdom to adorn it by befriending him, was nothing but the shame of being confounded, as one who lived by using his pen, with those who lived by its prostitution and abuse.

It was in vain he strove to escape this imputation. It increased and it clove to him. To become author was to be treated as adventurer : a man had only to write, to be classed with what Johnson calls the lowest of all human

beings, the scribbler for party. One of Fielding's remarks in the *True Patriot* is but a bitter sense of this injustice, under cover of a grave sneer. 'An author, in a country 'where there is no public provision for men of genius, 'is not obliged to be a more disinterested patriot than 'any other. Why is he, whose livelihood is in his pen, 'a greater monster in using it to serve himself, than he 'who uses his tongue for the same purpose?'

Nor was this injustice the work of the vulgar or unthinking; it was strongest in the greatest of living statesmen. If any one had told William Pitt that a new man of merit, called Goldsmith, was about to try the profession of literature, he would have turned aside in scorn. It had been sufficient to throw doubt upon the career of Edmund Burke, that, in this very year, he opened it with the writing of a book. It was Horace Walpole's vast surprise and bitter complaint, four years later, that so sensible a man as 'young Mr. Burke' should not have 'worn off his authorism 'yet! He thinks there is nothing so charming as writers, 'and to be one: he will know better one of these days.'

Such was the worldly account of Literature, when, as I have said, deserted by the patron, and not yet supported by the public, it was committed to the mercies of the bookseller. They were few and rare. It was the mission of Johnson to extend them, and to replace the writer's craft, in even its worldliest view, on a dignified and honourable basis; but Johnson's work was just begun. He was himself, as yet, one of the meaner workers for

hire; and though already author of the *Dictionary*, was too glad in this very year to have Robert Dodsley's guinea for writing paragraphs in the *London Chronicle*. 'Had you, sir, been an author of the lower class, one of those who are 'paid by the sheet,' remonstrated worthy printer Bowyer with an author who could pay, who did not need to be paid, and who would not be trifled with by the man of types. Of the lower class, unlike that dignitary Mr. John Jackson, still was Samuel Johnson; he was but a Grub Street man, paid by the sheet, when Goldsmith entered Grub Street, periodical writer and reviewer.

Periodicals were the fashion of the day. They were the means of those rapid returns, of that perpetual interchange of bargain and sale, so fondly cared for by the present arbiters of literature; and were now, universally, the favourite channel of literary speculation. Scarcely a week passed in which a new magazine or paper did not start into life, to die or live as might be. Even Fielding had turned from his *Jonathan Wild the Great*, to his *Jacobite Journal*, *True Patriot*, and *Champion*; and from his *Tom Jones* and *Amelia*, sought refuge in his *Covent Garden Journal*. We have the names of fifty-five papers of the date of a few years before this, regularly published every week. A more important literary venture, in the nature of a review, and with a title expressive of the fate of letters, the *Grub Street Journal*, had been brought to a close in 1737. Six years earlier than that, for a longer life, Cave issued the first number of the *Gentleman's*

*Magazine*. Griffiths, aided by Ralph, Kippis, Laughton, Grainger, and others, followed with the earliest regular *Review* which can be said to have succeeded, and, in 1749, began, on Whig principles, that publication of the *Monthly* which lasted till our own day. Seven years later, the Tories opposed it with the *Critical*, which, with slight alteration of title, existed to a very recent date, more strongly tainted with high-church advocacy and quasi-popish principles than when the first number, sent forth under the editorship of Smollett in March 1756, was on those very grounds assailed. In the May of that year of Goldsmith's life to which I have now arrived, another review, the *Universal*, began a short existence of three years, its principal contributor being Samuel Johnson, at this time wholly devoted to it.

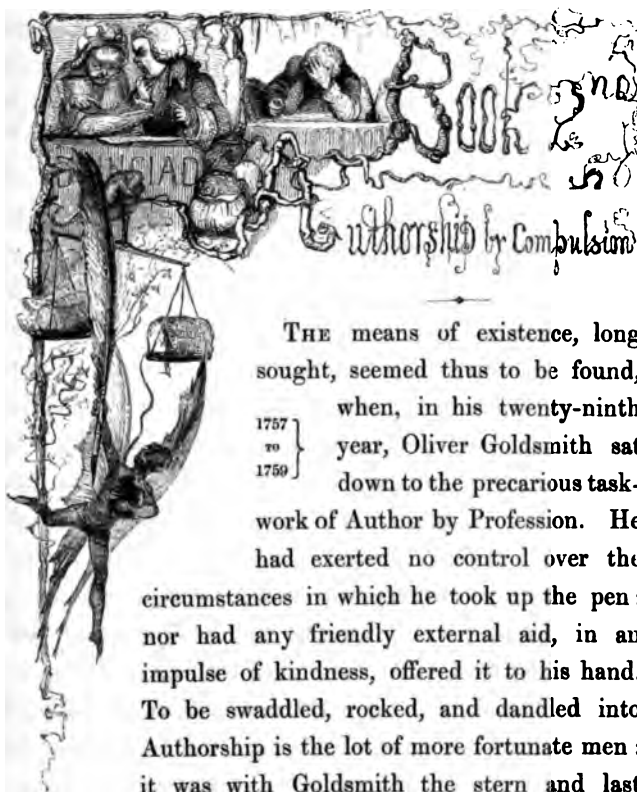
Such were a few of the examples that, if the least liberty of choice had been his, might have raised or depressed the sanguine heart of Oliver Goldsmith, when, under the watchful eye of Mr. and Mrs. Griffiths, now providers of his bed and board, he sat down in the bookseller's parlour in Paternoster Row, somewhat sarcastically faced with the sign of *The Dunciad*, to begin his engagement on the *Monthly Review*.

END OF FIRST BOOK.



**BOOK THE SECOND.**





THE means of existence, long sought, seemed thus to be found, when, in his twenty-ninth year, Oliver Goldsmith sat down to the precarious task-work of Author by Profession. He had exerted no control over the

1757  
to  
1759

circumstances in which he took up the pen: nor had any friendly external aid, in an impulse of kindness, offered it to his hand. To be swaddled, rocked, and dandled into Authorship is the lot of more fortunate men: it was with Goldsmith the stern and last resource of his struggle with Adversity. As in the country-barn he would have played

*Scrub* or *Richard*; as he prescribed for the poorer than himself at Bankside, until worse than their necessities drove him to herd with the beggars in Axe Lane; as in



Salisbury Court he corrected the press among Mr. Richardson's workmen, on Tower Hill doled out physic over Mr. Jacob's counter, and at Peckham dispensed the more nauseating dose to young gentlemen of Doctor Milner's academy: he had here entered into Mr. Griffiths' service, and put on the livery of the *Monthly Review*.

He was man-of-letters, then, at last; but had gratified no passion, and attained no object of ambition. The hope of greatness and distinction, day-star of his wanderings and his privations, was at this hour, more than it had ever been, dim, distant, cold. A practical scheme of literary life had as yet struck no root in his mind; and the assertion of later years, that he was past thirty before he was really attached to literature and sensible that he had found his vocation, is no doubt true. What the conditions of his present employment were, he knew well: that if he had dared to indulge any hopes of finer texture, if he had shewn the fragments of his poem, if he had produced the acts of the tragedy read to Richardson, Mr. and Mrs. Griffiths must have taken immediate counsel on the expenses of his board. He was there, as he had been in other places of servitude, because the dogs of hunger were at his heels. He was not a strong man, as I have said; but neither was his weakness such, that he shrank from the responsibilities it brought. When suffering came, in whatever form, he met it with a quiet, manful endurance: no gnashing of the teeth, or wringing of the hands. Among the lowest of human beings he could take

his place, as he afterwards proved his right to sit among the highest, by the strength of his affectionate sympathies with the nature common to all. And so sustained through the scenes of wretchedness he passed, he had done more, though with little consciousness of his own, to achieve his destiny, than if, transcending the worldly plans of wise Irish friends, he had even clambered to the bishop's bench, or out-practised the whole college of physicians.

The time is at hand in his history, when all this becomes clear. Outside the garret-window of Mr. Griffiths, by the light which the miserable labour of the *Monthly Review* will let in upon the heart-sick labourer, it may soon be seen. Stores of observation, of feeling, and experience, hidden from himself at present, are by that light to be revealed. It is a thought to carry us through this new scene of suffering, with new and unaccustomed hope.

Goldsmith never publicly avowed what he had written in the *Monthly Review*; any more than the Roman poet talked of the millstone he turned in his days of hunger. Men who have been at the galleys, though for no crime of their own committing, are not wise to brag of the work they performed there. All he stated was, that all he wrote was tampered with by Griffiths or his wife. Smollett has depicted this lady in his *Antiquated Female Critic*; and when 'illiterate, bookselling Griffiths' declared unequal war against that potent antagonist; protesting that the *Monthly* was not written by 'physicians

‘without practice, authors without learning, men without decency, or writers without judgment;’ Smollett retorted in a few broad unscrupulous lines on the whole party of the rival Review. ‘The *Critical* is certainly not written,’ he said, ‘by a parcel of obscure hirelings, under the restraint of a bookseller and his wife, who presume to revise, alter, and amend the articles. The principal writers in the *Critical* are unconnected with booksellers, unawed by old women, and independent of each other.’ Commanded by a bookseller, awed by an old woman, and miserably dependant, one of these obscure hirelings desired and resolved, as far as it was possible, to remain in his obscurity; but a copy of the *Monthly*, which belonged to Griffiths and in which he had privately marked the authorship of most of the articles, withdraws the veil. It is for no purpose that Goldsmith could have disapproved, or I should scorn to assist in calling to memory what he would himself have committed to neglect. The best writers can spare much; it is only the worst who have nothing to spare.

The first subject taken from the bookseller’s stores



was probably the least common-place of all they contained. This was the year (1757) in which, after six centuries of neglect, the great, dark, wonderful field of Northern Fiction began to be explored. Professor Mallet of Copenhagen had translated the *Edda*, and directed attention to the 'remains' of Scandinavian Poetry and Mythology: and Goldsmith's first effort in the *Monthly Review* was to describe the fruits of these researches, to point out resemblances to the inspiration of the East, and to note the picturesqueness and sublimity of the fierce old Norse imagination. 'The learned on this side 'the Alps,' he began (I quote from Mr. Prior's collection of these articles, in his last careful edition of the *Miscellaneous Works*), 'have long laboured at the anti-  
'quities of Greece and Rome, but almost totally neglected 'their own; like conquerors, who, while they have made 'inroads into the territories of their neighbours, have left 'their own natural dominions to desolation.' This was a lively interruption to the ordinary *Monthly* dulness, and perhaps the Percys, and intelligent subscribers of that sort, opened eyes a little wider at it. It was not long after, indeed, that Percy first began to dabble in *Runic Verses from the Icelandic*; before eight years were passed he had published his famous *Reliques*; and in five years more, during intimacy with the writer of this notice of Mallet, he produced his translation of Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*. In all this there was probably no connection; yet it is wonderful what a word in season from a man of genius

may do; even when the genius is hiring and obscure, and labouring only for the bread it eats.

More common-place was the respectable-looking thin duodecimo, with which Mr. Griffiths's workman began his next month's labour; but a duodecimo making noise enough for every octavo, quarto, and folio in the shop. This was *Douglas, a Tragedy, as it is acted at the Theatre Royal, in Covent Garden*. It was not acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, because Garrick, who so complacently exhibited himself next year in *Agis*, in the *Siege of Aquileia*, and other ineffable dulness from the same hand (wherein his quick suspicious glance detected no Lady Randolphs), would have nothing to do with the character of Douglas. What would come with danger from the full strength of Mrs. Cibber, might be safely left to the enfeebled powers of Mrs. Woffington: he had no one to fear but Barry, at the rival house. But alike despairing of Covent Garden, to the North had good parson Home returned, and not till eight months were gone, sent back his play endorsed by the Scottish capital. *There* it had been acted; and from the beginning of the world, from the beginning of Edinburgh, the like of that play had not been known. The Poker Club made its ecstasies felt from Hunter Square to Grub Street and St. James's, for no rise in the price of claret had yet imperilled the life of that excellent society. Without stint or measure to their warmth the cooling beverage flowed; and bottle after bottle (at eighteenpence a piece) disappeared in honour of the

Scottish Shakspeare, whom the most illustrious of the Pokers at once pronounced better than the English, because free from 'unhappy barbarism.' Yes, refined from the unhappy barbarism of our southern Shakspeare, and purged of the licentiousness of our poor London-starved Otway. It was veritably David Hume's opinion, and still stands in the dedication to the *Four Dissertations* he was bringing out at the time, that 'Johnny Home' had all the theatric genius of these two poets so refined and purged. But little was even a Philosopher's exaltation, to the persecution of a Presbytery. No man better than Hume knew that. The first volume of his *History* had lain hopelessly on Millar's shelves, after sale of forty-five copies in a twelvemonth, when on inquisitorial proceedings of the General Assembly against Lord Kames and himself, the public in turn became inquisitive, and began to buy. And, surely as the *History* of Hume, must even puffery of Home have languished, but for that resolve of the Presbytery to eject from his pulpit a parson who had written a play. It carried *Douglas* to London; secured a nine nights' reasonable wonder; and the noise of the carriages on their way to Covent Garden to see the Norval of silver-tongued Barry, were now giving sudden headaches to David Garrick, and strange comparisons of silver tongues to the hooting of owls.

But out of reach of every influence to raise or to depress, unless it be a passing thought now and then to his own tragic fragments, sits the critic with the thin

duodecimo before him. The popular stir affects even quiet Gray in his cloistered nook of Pembroke Hall; but the sharp, clear, graceful judgment now lodged and boarded at The Dunciad, shews itself quite un-affected. 'When the town,' it began, 'by a tedious succession of 'indifferent performances, has been long confined to censure, it will naturally wish for an opportunity of praise.' That is, as I translate it, the town, sick of Doctor Brown's *Athelstan* and *Barbarossa*, of Mr. Whitehead's *Creusa*, of Mr. Crisp's *Virginia*, of Mr. Glover's *Boadicea*, of Doctor Francis's *Eugenia*, of Mr. Aaron Hill's *Merope*, of the *Regulus* of Mr. Havard, and the *Mahomet* of Mr. Miller, turns to anything of the reasonable promise of a *Douglas*, with disposition to enjoy it if they can. But the more striking, Goldsmith felt, was the indiscreetness which could obtrude a work like *Douglas* 'as perfection:' in proof of which critical folly he made brief but keen mention of its leading defects: while to those who would plead in arrest particular beauties of diction, he directed a remark which, half a century later, was worked out in detail by the Coleridge and Schlegel reviewers. 'In works of 'this nature, general observation often characterises more 'strongly than a particular criticism could do; for it 'were an easy task to point out those passages in any 'indifferent author where he has excelled himself, and yet 'these comparative beauties, if we may be allowed the 'expression, may have no real merit at all. Poems, like 'buildings, have their point of view; and too near a

‘situation gives but a partial conception of the whole.’ Good-naturedly, at the same time, he closes with quotation of two of the best passages in the poem, emphatically marking with excellent taste five lines of allusion to the wars of Scotland and England.

Gallant in strife, and noble in their ire,  
The battle is their pastime. They go forth  
Gay in the morning, as to summer sport :  
When evening comes, the glory of the morn,  
The youthful warrior, is a clod of clay.

If Boswell, on Johnson’s challenge to shew any good lines out of *Douglas*, had mustered sense and discrimination to offer these, the Doctor could hardly have exploded his emphatic *poo*h ! Goldsmith differed little from Johnson in the matter, it is true : but his *poo*h was more polite.

A Scottish Homer followed the Shakspeare : Mr. Griffiths submitting to his boarder, in a very thick duodecimo, *The Epigoniad, A Poem in Nine Books*. Doctor Wilkie’s laboured versification of his Homeric Episode got into Anderson’s collection, the editor being a Scotsman : though candid enough to say of it, that ‘too antique to please the unlettered reader, and too modern for the scholar, it was neglected by both, read by few, and soon forgotten by all.’ Yet this very common-place editor might have been more candid, and told us that his sentence was stolen from the *Monthly Review*. After discussion of the claims justly due and always conceded to a writer of genuine learning, Goldsmith remarked : ‘on the contrary, if he be detected of ignorance when he pretends to learning, his



'case will deserve our pity: too antique to please one party, and too modern for the other, he is deserted by both, read by few, and soon forgotten by all, except his enemies.' Perhaps if his friends had forgotten him, the Doctor might have profited. 'The *Epigoniad*,' continued Goldsmith, 'seems to be one of those new old performances; a work that would no more have pleased a peripatetic of the Academic grove, than it will captivate the unlettered subscriber to one of our circulating libraries.' Nevertheless the Scottish clique made a stand for their rough Homeric Doctor. Smith, Robertson, and Home were vehement in laudation; Charles Townshend ('who,' writes Hume to Adam Smith, 'passes for the cleverest fellow in England') said aye to all their praises; and when, some months afterward, Hume came up to London to bring out the Tudor volumes of his History, he published puffs of Wilkie under assumed signatures, in various magazines, and reported progress to the Edinburgh circle. It was remarkably 'uphill work,' he said; and broadly hinted that the verdict of the *Monthly Review* (vulgarly interpolated, I should mention, by Griffiths himself) would have upon the whole to stand. 'However,' he adds, in one of his letters to Robertson, 'if you want a little flattery for the author, which I own is very refreshing to an author, you may tell him that Lord Chesterfield said to me he was a great poet. I imagine that Wilkie will be very much elevated by praise from an English Earl, and a Knight of the Garter, and an Ambassador, and a Secretary of

‘State.’ It is to be hoped he was, and proportionately forgetful of low abuse from obscure hirelings in booksellers’ garrets.

‘An Irish gentleman,’ Hume proceeded to tell his friends, ‘wrote lately a very pretty treatise on the Sublime.’ This Irish gentleman had indeed written so pretty a treatise on the Sublime, that the task-work of our critic became work of praise. ‘When I was beginning the world,’ said Johnson in his old age to Fanny Burney, ‘and was nothing and nobody, the joy of my life was to fire at all the established wits.’ Perhaps it is a natural infirmity when one is nothing and nobody, and when Goldsmith became something and somebody, his friends still charged it upon him. A critic of the profounder sort he never was : criticism of that order was not known in his day : but it is less the want of depth, than the presence of envy, which it has been the fashion to urge against him. It will become us therefore in fairness to observe, that here, in the garret of Griffiths, he is tolerably free from it. Whether it is to seize him in the drawing-room of Reynolds, will be matter of later inquiry. He has no pretension yet to enter himself brother or craftsman of the Guild of Literature, and we find him in his censures just and temperate, and liberal as well as candid in his praise ; glad to give added fame to established wits, as even the youths Bonnell Thornton and George Colman were already beginning to be esteemed ; and ready, in such a case as Burke’s, to help

that the wit should be established. In the same number of the Review, he noticed the collection into four small volumes of the *Connoisseur* and the appearance in its three-shilling pamphlet of *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. The *Connoisseur* he honoured with the title of Friend of Society, wherein reference was possibly intended to the defective side of that Lectureship of Society, to which the serious and resolute author of the *Rambler* had been lately self-appointed perpetual professor. 'He rather converses,' said Goldsmith, 'with the ease of a cheerful companion, 'than dictates, as other writers in this class have done, 'with the affected superiority of an author. He is the 'first writer since Bickerstaff who has been perfectly 'satirical yet perfectly goodnatured; and who never, for 'the sake of declamation, represents simple folly as absolutely criminal.' Our author by compulsion seemed here to anticipate his authorship by choice, and with indistinct yet hopeful glance beyond *The Dunciad* and its deities, perhaps turned with better faith to Burke's essay on *The Beautiful*. His criticism was elaborate and excellent; he objected to many parts of the theory, and especially to the materialism on which it founded the connection of objects of pleasure with a necessary relaxation of the nerves; but these objections, discreet and well considered, gave strength and relish to its praise; and Burke spoke to many of his friends of the pleasure it had given him.

And now appeared, in three large quarto volumes,

followed within six months by a fourth, the *Complete History of England, deduced from the Descent of Julius Cæsar to the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle in 1748. Containing the Transactions of One Thousand Eight Hundred and Three Years.* By T. Smollett, M.D. The wonder of this performance had been its incredibly rapid production: the author of *Random* and *Pickle* having in the space of fourteen months scoured through those eighteen centuries. It was a scheme of the London booksellers to thwart the success of Hume, which promised just then to be too considerable for an undertaking in which The Craft had no concern. The Commonwealth volume, profiting by religious outcry against its author, was selling vigorously; people were inquiring for the preceding Stuart volume; and Paternoster Row, alarmed for its rights and properties in Standard History Books, resolved to take the field before the promised Tudor volumes could be brought to market. They backed their best man, and succeeded. The *Complete History*, we are told, 'had a very disagreeable effect on Mr. Hume's performance.' It had also, it would appear, a very disagreeable effect on Mr. Hume's temper. 'A Frenchman came to me,' he writes to Robertson, 'and spoke of translating my new volume of 'history: but as he also mentioned his intention of translating Smollett, I gave him no encouragement to proceed.' It had beside, it may be added, a very disagreeable effect on the tempers of other people. Warburton heard of its swift sale while his own *Divine Legation* lay heavy and

quiet at his publisher's; and 'the Vagabond Scot who writes nonsense', was the character vouchsafed to Smollett by the vehement proud priest. But it is again incumbent on me to say that Goldsmith keeps his temper: that, in this as in former instances, there is no disposition to carp at a great success or quarrel with a celebrated name. His notice has evident marks of the interpolation of Griffiths, though that worthy's more deadly hostility to Smollett had not yet begun; but even as it stands, in the *Review* which had so many points of personal and political opposition to the subject of it, it is manly and kind. The weak places were pointed out with gentleness, while Goldsmith strongly seized on what he felt to be the strength of Smollett. 'The Style of this historian,' he said, 'is clear, nervous, and flowing. It is impossible for a reader of taste not to be pleased with the perspicuity and elegance of his style.'

For the critic's handling in lighter matters, I will mention what he said of a book by Jonas Hanway. This was the Jonas of whom Doctor Johnson affirmed, that he acquired some reputation by travelling abroad, but lost it all by travelling at home: not a witticism, but a sober truth. His book about Persia was excellent, and his book about Portsmouth indifferent. But though an eccentric, he was a very benevolent and earnest man. He made the common mistake of thinking himself even more wise than he was good, but he had too much reason to complain, which he was always doing, of a general want of earnestness

and seriousness in his age. His larger schemes of benevolence have connected his name with the Marine Society, and the Magdalen, both of which he originated; as well as with the Foundling, which he was active in improving; and to his courage and perseverance in smaller fields of usefulness (his determined contention with extravagant vails to servants not the least), the men of Goldsmith's day were indebted for liberty to use an Umbrella. Gay's pleasant poem of *Trivia* commemorates its earlier use by poor women; by 'tuck'd-up sempstresses' and 'walking maids;' but with even this class it was a winter privilege, and woe to the woman of a better sort, or to the man, whether rich or poor, who dared at any time so to invade the rights of coachmen and chairmen. But Jonas steadily underwent the staring, laughing, jeering, hooting, and bullying; and having punished some insolent knaves who struck him with their whips as well as tongues, he finally established a privilege which, when the *Journal des Débats* gravely assured its readers that the King of the Barricades was to be seen walking the streets of Paris with an umbrella under his arm, had reached its culminating point and played a part in state affairs. Excellent Mr. Hanway, having settled the use of the umbrella, made a less successful move when he would have written down the use of tea.

This is one of the prominent subjects in the *Journey from Portsmouth*: the book which Griffiths had now placed in his workman's hands. Doctor Johnson's review of it for the *Literary Magazine* is widely known: but

Goldsmith's deserved notoriety as well. It is more kindly, and as effectively, written. He saw what allowance could be made for a writer, however mistaken, who 'shews great 'goodness of heart, and an earnest concern for the welfare 'of his country.' Where the book was at its worst, the man might be at his best, he very agreeably shews. 'The appearance of an inn on the road suggests to our 'philosopher an eulogium on temperance; the confusion 'of a disappointed landlady gives rise to a letter on resentment; and the view of a company of soldiers furnishes 'out materials for an essay on war.' As to the anti-souchong mania, Goldsmith laughs at it: and this was doubtless the wisest way. 'He', exclaimed Jonas in horror, 'who should be able to drive three Frenchmen before 'him, or she who might be a breeder of such a race of 'men, are to be seen sipping their tea! What a wild 'infatuation is this! The suppression of so dangerous a 'custom depends entirely on the example of ladies of rank 'in this country. Some indeed have resolution enough 'in their own houses to confine the use of tea to their own 'table: but their number is so extremely small, amidst a 'large acquaintance I know only of Mrs. . . . whose 'name ought to be written out in letters of gold.' 'Thus 'we see,' rejoins Goldsmith, 'how fortunate some folks 'are. Mrs. . . . is praised for confining luxury to her own 'table: she earns fame, and saves something in domestic 'expenses!' In subsequent serious expostulation with Mr. Hanway on some medical assumptions in his book,

the reviewer lays aside his humble patched velvet of Bank-side, and speaks as though with nothing less invested than the President's gold-headed cane: after which he closes with this piece of quiet good-sense. 'Yet after all, why so violent an outcry against this devoted article of modern luxury? Every nation that is rich hath had, and will have, its favourite luxuries. Abridge the people in one, they generally run into another. And the reader may judge which will be most conducive to either mental or bodily health: the watery beverage of a modern fine lady, or the strong beer, and stronger waters, of her great-grandmother?'

This paper had appeared in July: in which number there was also a clever notice from the same hand of Dobson's translation of the First Book of Cardinal de Polignac's Latin poem of *Anti-Lucretius*: the poem whose ill success stopped Gray in what he playfully called his *Tommy Lucretius* ('De Principiis Cogitandi'). The Cardinal's work I may mention as a huge monument of vanity: the talk of the world in those days, now forgotten. It was the work of a life; could boast of having been corrected by Boileau and altered by Louis the Fourteenth; and was kept in manuscript so long, and so often, with inordinate self-complacency, publicly recited from by the author in kind earnest of what the world was to expect, that some listeners with good memories (Le Clerc among them) stole its best passages, and published them for the world's earlier benefit as their own.



This drove the poor Cardinal to premature delivery, and an instalment of thirteen thousand lines appeared; of which perhaps one line (*Eripuitque Jovi fulmen, Phœboque sagittas*), having since suggested Franklin's epitaph (*Eripuit cœlo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis*), has a chance



to live. To the August *Review*, among other matters, Goldsmith contributed a lively paper on those new volumes of Voltaire's *Universal History*, which so delighted Walpole: but in the September number, where he remarks on *Odes*



by Mr. Gray, I find opinions which place in lively contrast the obscure Oliver and the brilliant Horace.

Walpole called himself a Whig, in compliment to his father; but except in his rarer humours he hated, while he envied, all things popular. 'I am more humbled,' was his cry, when thirsting for every kind of notoriety, 'I am more humbled by any applause in the present age, than by hosts of such critics as Dean Miller.' He was very steady in his fondness for Gray, both because Gray was master of some secrets of their earlier life that a little

affected him, and because there was that real indifference to popular influences in the poet, which the wit and fine gentleman was anxious to have credit for. Six years before the present, he proclaimed this liking to the world as loudly as he could, by a Strawberry Hill edition of the *Eton College Ode* and *Churchyard Elegy*; and when he heard, in the July of this year, that Gray had left his loved Pembroke Hall for a visit to Dodsley the bookseller, he hurried to London, as he says himself, to 'snatch' away the new *Odes* for another pet publication at Strawberry Hill. These were the *Bard* and the *Progress of Poesy*; two noble productions, it must surely be admitted, whatever of cavil can be urged against them: though not to be admired as Walpole admired. Their weaknesses were to him their strength; he treasured every obscure allusion; would have had the remoteness and violent effort even more remote and violent; would have closed the page, if he could, to all but the circles he moved in; and cherished most those too fastidious fears, which checked Gray's otherwise certain flight into the highest poetic heaven. On the other hand I find no evidence that the pathos and sublimity of his friend had rightly affected him: that he could sympathise with the grand tone of melancholy, or discover the deep and touching human reference, which prevail over every minor fault in those remarkable poems. He never praises without shewing his dislike of others, much more than his love of Gray. 'You are very particular,' he says to Montague, 'in liking Gray's *Odes*: but

'you must remember the age likes Akenside, and did like Thomson! Can the same people like both?' It was a habit of depreciation much in the manner of the time. Even the enchanting genius of Collins struck no responsive chord in Gray himself; nor had the *Elegies* of Shenstone, the *Imagination* of Akenside, or even the *Castle of Indolence* itself, given grateful addition to the lettered idleness of the learned poet of Pembroke Hall.

But Goldsmith was not yet to this manner born, and when Mr. Griffiths laid Gray's handsome quarto before him, was disposed to no comparison or test less fair than his own feeling of the objects and aims of poetry. And this he stated with a strength and plainness, which marks with personal interest what was said of Gray. Verses of his own he had already written, fragments of exquisite simplicity: what now appears will one day give them unity and aim, and raise them into enduring structures. We observe the gradual development of settled views; the better defined thoughts which these rude beginnings of literature are breeding in him; the rich upturning of the soil of his mind, as Mr. Griffiths passes with his harrow. The toils and sufferings of the past are not only yielding fruit to him now, but teaching him how it may be gathered.

The lesson is very simple: but of inappreciable value. It is the reverse of Horace Walpole's. It is to study the people, whom Walpole would disregard; to address those popular sympathies, which he affected to despise; to speak the language of the heart, of which he knew so little; and

before all things study, what his delicate gentility found unendurably tedious, the joys and the sorrows of the poor. It is the lesson which Roger Ascham would have taught two hundred and fifty years before : to think as a wise man, but to speak as the common people. ' We cannot without ' regret,' Goldsmith wrote, ' behold talents so capable of ' giving pleasure to all, exerted in efforts that at best can ' amuse only the few : we cannot behold this rising poet ' seeking fame among the learned, without hinting to him ' the advice that Isocrates used to give his scholars, ' *Study the People*. This study it is that has conducted ' the great masters of antiquity up to immortality. Pindar ' himself, of whom our modern lyrist is an imitator, appears ' entirely guided by it. He adapted his works exactly to the ' dispositions of his countrymen. Irregular, enthusiastic, ' and quick in transition, he wrote for a people inconstant, ' of warm imagination, and exquisite sensibility. He chose ' the most popular subjects, and all his allusions are to ' customs well known, in his days, to the meanest person.'

Admirable rebuke to those who seize the form, but not the spirit, of an elder time ; and mistake the phrase which passes in a century, for the heart which is young for ever. The poetical genius of which Goldsmith is already conscious, was in its essential character of a lower grade than that of Gray : but the exquisite uses to which he will direct it, the wise and earnest purpose which will shape and control it, are to be read, as it seems to me, in this excellent piece of criticism.

Mr. Gray, continued Goldsmith, wants the Greek writer's advantages. 'He speaks to a people not easily impressed with new ideas; extremely tenacious of the old; with difficulty warmed, and as slowly cooling again. How unsuited to our national character is that species of poetry which rises upon us with unexpected flights; where we must hastily catch the thought, or it flies from us; and the reader must largely partake of the poet's enthusiasm, in order to taste his beauties! Mr. Gray's *Odes*, it may be confessed, breathe much of the spirit of Pindar; but they have also caught the seeming obscurity, the sudden transition, and hazardous epithet of his mighty master; all which, though intended for beauties, will probably be regarded as blemishes by the generality of his readers. In short, they are in some measure a representation of what Pindar now appears to be, though not what he appeared to the States of Greece, when they rivalled each other in his applause, and when Pan himself was seen dancing to his melody.' Than this, nothing happier could be said.

Of the capabilities of Gray's genius, misdirected as he thus believed it to be, it is delightful to mark Goldsmith's strong appreciation. He speaks of him, in the emphatic line of the *Country Elegy*, as one whom the Muse had marked for her own. He grieves that 'such a genius' should not do justice to itself; and quotes passages from the *Bard* to support his belief that they are as great 'as anything of that species of composition which has hitherto

'appeared in our language, the *Odes* of Dryden himself 'not excepted.' Certainly to the two exceptions which, while Goldsmith wrote, Gray was describing to Hurd ('My friends tell me that the *Odes* do not succeed, and 'write me many topics of consolation on that head: I 'have heard of nobody but an actor and a doctor of 'divinity that profess their esteem for them'), might with some reason have been added, the poor monthly critic of *The Dunciad*.

With this Number of the *Review*, completing the fifth month of his engagement, his labours suddenly closed. The circumstances were never clearly explained; but that a serious quarrel had arisen with his employer, there is no reason to doubt. Griffiths accused him of idleness: said he affected an independence which did not become his condition, and left his desk before the day was done. Goldsmith retorted, that from the bookseller he had suffered impertinence, and from his wife privation; that Mr. Griffiths withheld common respect, and Mrs. Griffiths the most ordinary comforts; that they both tampered with his articles, and as it suited their ignorance or convenience wholly altered them; and, finally, that no part of the contract had been broken by himself, having always worked incessantly every day from nine o'clock till two, and on special days of the week from an earlier hour until late at night. Proof of the most curious part of this counter-statement, as to interpolation of the articles, was in the possession of his first biographers; and as it now

appears, from a published letter of Dr. Campbell to Bishop Percy, was at the last moment, in fear of abuse from the *Review*, suppressed.

But notwithstanding the quarrel, and Goldsmith's departure from the house, Griffiths retained his hold. Later events will show this; and that probably some small advance was his method of effecting it. It enabled him to keep up the appearance of civility when Goldsmith left his door; and to keep back the purpose of injury and insult till it could fall with heavier effect. The opportunity was not lost when it came, nor did the bookseller's malice end with the writer's death. '*Superintend the Monthly Review!*' cried Griffiths, noticing, in the Number for August 1774, a brief memoir of Goldsmith in which his connection with the work was so described. 'We are authorised to say that this is a very mistaken assertion. The Doctor had his merit as a man of letters; but alas! those that knew him must smile at the idea of such a Superintendent of a concern which most obviously required some degree of prudence, as well as a competent acquaintance with the world. It is, however, true that he had for a while a seat at our board; and that, so far as his knowledge of books extended, he was not an unuseful assistant.'

And so; without this belauded prudence; without this treasure of a competent acquaintance with the world; into that wide, friendless, desolate world, the poor writer, the not unuseful assistant, was launched again. How or where he lived for the next few months, is matter of great

uncertainty. But his letters were addressed to the Temple Exchange Coffee-House, near Temple-Bar, where the 'George' he celebrates in one of his Essays took charge of them; the garret where he wrote and slept is supposed to have been in one of the courts near the neighbouring Salisbury Square; Doctor Kippis, one of the Monthly Reviewers, 'was impressed by some faint recollection of his having made translations from the French, among others of a tale from Voltaire;' and the recollection is made stronger by one of his autographs in Heber's Collection, which purports to be a receipt from Mr. Ralph Griffiths for ten guineas, probably signed a day or two before he left the *Monthly*, for translation of a book entitled *Memoirs of my Lady B.* Another writer in the *Review*, Doctor James Grainger, to whom his residence at The Dunciad had made him known; and of whom the translation of *Tibullus*, the *Ode to Solitude*, and the poem of the *Sugar-Cane*, have kept a memory very pleasant, though very limited; made the same Coffee-House his place of call, and often saw Goldsmith there. The month in which he separated from Griffiths was that in which Newberry's *Literary Magazine* lost Johnson's services; but this seems the only ground for a surmise that those services were replaced by Goldsmith's. The book itself shows little mark of his hand until his admitted connection with it, some months later.

Toiling thus through an obscurity dark as the life itself, the inquirer finds on a sudden a glimpse of light,



which for an instant places him in that garret near Salisbury Square. Its inmate sits alone in wretched drudgery, when the door opens, and a raw-looking country youth of twenty stands doubtfully on the doleful threshold. Goldsmith sees at once his youngest brother Charles; but Charles cannot bring himself to see, in the occupier of this miserable dwelling, the brother on whose supposed success he had already built his own! Without educa-



tion, profession, friends, or resource of any kind, it had suddenly occurred to this enterprising Irish lad, as he lounged in weary idleness round Ballymahon, that as brother Oliver had not been asking for assistance lately, but was now a settled author in London, perhaps he had

gotten great men for his friends, and a kind word to one of them might be the making of *his* fortune. Full of this, he scrambled to London as he could, won the secret of the house from the Temple Exchange waiter to whom he confided his relationship, and found the looked-for architect of wealth and honour, *here!* 'All in good time, my 'dear boy,' cried Oliver joyfully, to check the bitterness of despair. 'All in good time: I shall be richer by and by. 'Beside you see, I am not in positive want. Addison, 'let me tell you, wrote his poem of the *Campaign* in a 'garret in the Haymarket, three stories high; and you 'see I am not come to that yet, for I have only got to 'the second story.' He made Charles sit and answer questions about his Irish friends: but at this point the light is again withdrawn, and for some two months there is greater darkness than before.

Charles quitted London in a few days, suddenly and secretly as he had entered it, and shortly sailed, 'in a 'humble capacity' it is said, for Jamaica: whence he did not return till after thirty years, to tell this anecdote. The next clear view of Oliver is from a letter to his brother-in-law Hodson, with the date of 'Temple 'Exchange Coffee-House (where you may direct an answer), Dec. 27, 1757: 'fortunately kept. The miserable year had brought no happier Christmas to Goldsmith; but he writes with a manly cheerfulness, which offers no selfish affront to the unselfish spirit of the season. Some unsuccessful efforts of this Hodson to raise a subscription,

in answer to the supplication for Irish aid during the travel abroad, seems to have been mentioned by Charles; and gratitude, for a little made Goldsmith grateful, prompted the letter. He begins by reminding his kinsman that his last letter to him was left unanswered. ‘ My brother ‘ Charles, however, informs me of the fatigue you were at ‘ in soliciting a subscription to assist me, not only among ‘ my friends and relatives, but acquaintances in general. ‘ Though my pride might feel some repugnance at being ‘ thus relieved, yet my gratitude can suffer no diminution. ‘ How much am I obliged to you, to them, for such ‘ generosity, or . . . why should not your virtues have their ‘ proper name? . . . for such charity to me at that juncture. ‘ My not receiving that supply was the cause of my ‘ present establishment in London. You may easily ‘ imagine what difficulties I had to encounter, left as I was ‘ without friends, recommendations, money, or impudence : ‘ and that in a country where being born an Irishman was ‘ sufficient to keep me unemployed. Many, in such ‘ circumstances, would have had recourse to the friar’s ‘ cord, or the suicide’s halter. But, with all my follies, I ‘ had principle to resist the one and resolution to combat ‘ the other. I suppose you desire to know my present ‘ situation. As there is nothing in it at which I should ‘ blush, or which mankind could censure, I see no reason ‘ for making it a secret. In short, by a very little practice ‘ as a physician, and a very little reputation as a poet, I ‘ make a shift to live. Nothing is more apt to introduce us

‘ to the gates of the Muses than poverty ; but it were well  
‘ if they only left us at the door. The mischief is, they  
‘ sometimes choose to give us their company at the enter-  
‘ tainment ; and WANT, instead of being Gentleman-usher,  
‘ often turns Master of the Ceremonies. Thus, upon learn-  
‘ ing I write, no doubt you imagine I starve ; and the  
‘ name of an author naturally reminds you of a garret.  
‘ In this particular I do not think proper to undeceive my  
‘ friends. But whether I eat or starve, live in a first floor  
‘ or four pair of stairs high, I still remember *them* with  
‘ ardour.’

This glance at the gloomy aspect of his present fortunes, were less pathetic to me if it had been less playful. His Irish friends had shown the charitable wish, however unavailing ; and he would not trouble friendly eyes with needless exhibition of his sufferings, or make Grim Want the Master of other than somewhat cheerful Ceremonies. Lightly and quickly he passes from the subject, to that unaccountable fondness for Ireland already mentioned in connection with this letter. What little pleasures he had ever tasted in London, he says, Irish memories had soured. Signora Columba had never poured out all the mazes of melody, that he did not sit and sigh for Lissoy fireside, and Peggy Golden’s song of *Johnny Armstrong’s Last Good Night*. ‘ If I climb Hampstead Hill, than  
‘ where Nature never exhibited a more magnificent prospect,  
‘ I confess it fine ; but then I had rather be placed on the  
‘ little mount before Lissoy gate, and there take in, to

‘me, the most pleasing horizon in nature. Before Charles came hither, my thoughts sometimes found refuge from severer studies among my friends in Ireland. I fancied strange revolutions at home; but I find it was the rapidity of my own motion that gave an imaginary one to objects really at rest. No alterations there. Some friends, he tells me, are still lean, but very rich: others very fat, but still very poor. Nay, all the news I hear of *you* is, that you sally out in visits among the neighbours, and sometimes make a migration from the blue bed to the brown. I could from my heart wish that you and your wife, and Lissoy, and Ballymahon, and all of you, would fairly make a migration into Middlesex.’ He adds, that if they do not, he believes he must go next year to see them; and subscribes himself his ‘dear Dan’s affectionate kinsman.’

Poet and Physician: ragged livery of Grub Street under the one high-sounding name, and wretched fee-less patients beneath the other. He was the poet of Hogarth’s print, which the common people then hailed with laughter at every print-shop; he was again, it would seem, the poor physician of the patched velvet among hovels of Bankside; and yet it was but pleasant colouring for the comfort of brother-in-law Hodson, when he said that with both he made a shift to live. With even more, he failed to attain that object of humble ambition.

In February, 1758, two duodecimos appeared with this most explanatory title: ‘*The Memoirs of a Protestant, con-*

*' demned to the Galleys of France for his Religion. Written  
' by himself. Comprehending an account of the various  
' distresses he suffered in slavery, and his constancy in  
' supporting almost every cruelty that bigoted zeal could  
' inflict, or human nature sustain. Also a description of  
' the Galleys, and the service in which they are employed.  
' The whole interspersed with anecdotes relative to the  
' general history of the times for a period of thirteen  
' years, during which the author continued in slavery,  
' till he was at last set free at the intercession of the  
' Court of Great Britain. Translated from the Original,  
' just published at the Hague, by James Willington.'*  
James Willington was in reality Oliver Goldsmith. The property of the book belonged to Griffiths, who valued one name quite as much as the other; and the position of the translator appears in the subsequent assignment of the manuscript, at no small profit to Griffiths, by the Pater-noster-Row bookseller to bookseller Dilly of the Poultry, for the sum of twenty guineas. But though the translator's name might pass for Willington, the writer could only write as Goldsmith; though with bitterness he calls himself 'the obscure prefacer,' the preface is clear, graceful, and characteristic, as in brighter days. The book cannot be recommended, he says, 'as a grateful entertain-  
' ment to the readers of reigning romance, for it is strictly  
' true. No events are here to astonish; no unexpected  
' incidents to surprise; no such high-finished pictures, as  
' captivate the imagination, and have made fiction fashion-

'able. Our reader must be content with the simple exhibition of truth. He must be satisfied to see Vice triumphant and Virtue in distress; to see men punished or rewarded, not as his wishes but as Providence has thought proper to direct; for all here wears the face of sincerity.' He glances at the scenes of dungeon, rack, and scaffold through which the narrative will pass, and calls them but a part of the accumulated wretchedness of a miscalled glorious time 'while Louis, surnamed the Great, was feasting at Versailles, fed with the incense of flattery, or sunk in the lewd embraces of a prostitute.'

But why stood 'James Willington' on the title page of this book, instead of 'Oliver Goldsmith,' since the names were both unknown? The question will not admit of a doubtful answer, though a braver I could wish to have given. At this point there is evidence of despair.

Not without well-earned knowledge had Goldsmith passed through the task-work of the *Monthly Review*; faculties which lay unused within him, were by this time not unknown; and a stronger man, with a higher constancy and fortitude, might with that knowledge have pushed resolutely on, and, conquering the fate of those who look back when their objects are forward, found earlier sight of the singing tree and the golden water. But to him it seemed hopeless to climb any further up the desperate steep; over the dark obstructions which the world is glad to interpose between itself and the best labourers in its service, he had not as yet risen high enough to see

the glimmering of light beyond. Even lower, therefore, than the school-room at Doctor Milner's, from which he had been taken to his literary toil, he thought himself now descended; and in a sudden sense of misery more intolerable, might have cried with Edgar,

O gods! who is 't can say 'I am at the worst'!  
*I am worse than e'er I was.*

He returned to Doctor Milner's. If ever again to return to Literature, to embrace it for choice and with a braver heart endure its worst necessities.

There came that time; and when, eighteen months after the present date, he was writing the *Bee*, he thus turned into pleasant fiction the incidents now described. 'I was once induced to shew my indignation against the public, by discontinuing my endeavours to please; and was bravely resolved, like Raleigh, to vex them by burning my manuscripts in a passion. Upon recollection, however, I considered what set or body of people would be displeased at my rashness. The sun after so sad an accident, might shine next morning as bright as usual; men might laugh and sing the next day, and transact business as before; and not a single creature feel any regret but myself. Instead of having Apollo in mourning, or the Muses in a fit of the spleen; instead of having the learned world apostrophising at my untimely decease; perhaps all Grub Street might laugh at my fate, and self-approving dignity be unable to shield me from ridicule.' Worse than ridicule had he spared



himself, with timely aid of these better thoughts ; but they came too late. He made his melancholy journey to Peckham, and knocked at Doctor Milner's door.

The schoolmaster was not an unkind or unfriendly man, and would in any circumstances, there is little doubt, have given Goldsmith the shelter he sought. It happened now that he had special need of him : sickness disabling himself from the proper school-attendance. So again installed poor usher, week passed over week as of old, with suffering, contempt, and many forms of care. Milner saw what he endured ; was moved by it ; and told him that as soon as health enabled himself to resume the duties of the school, he would exert an influence to place his usher in some medical appointment at a foreign station. He knew an East India Director through whom it might be done. It was what he desired before all things, said Goldsmith fervently.

And now, with something like the prospect of a settled future to bear him up against the uncongenial and uncertain present, what leisure he had for other than school labour he gave to a literary project of his own designing. This was natural : for we cling with a strange new fondness to what we must soon abandon, and it is the strong resolve to separate which has most often made separation impossible. Nor, apart from this, is there ground for the feeling of surprise, or the charge of vacillating purpose. His daily bread provided here, literature again presented itself to his thoughts as in his foreign wanderings ; and to

have left better record of himself than the garbled page of Griffiths' *Review*, would be a comfort in his exile. Some part of his late experience, so dearly bought, should be freely told; with it could be arranged and combined, what store of literary fruit he had gathered in his travel; and no longer commanded by a bookseller, or overawed by an old woman, he might frankly deliver to the world some wholesome truths of the decay of letters and the rewards of genius. In this spirit he conceived the *Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe*. And if he had reason bitterly to feel, in his own case, that he had failed to break down the barriers which encircled the profession of literature, here might a helping hand be stretched forth to the relief of others, still struggling for a better fate in its difficult environments.

With this design another expectation arose: that the publication, properly managed, might give him means for the outfit his appointment would render necessary. And he bethought him of his Irish friends. The zeal so lately professed might now be exerted with effect, nor plague their pockets or his pride. In those days, and indeed till the Act of Union was passed, the English writer had no copyright in Ireland: it being a part of the independence of Irish booksellers to steal from English authors, and of the Irish parliament to protect the theft: just as, not twenty years before this date, that excellent native parliament had, on the attempt of a Catholic to recover estates which in the manner of the booksellers a Protestant had

seized, voted 'all barristers, solicitors, attorneys and proctors, who should be concerned for him,' *public enemies!* But that serviceable use might be made of the early transmission to Ireland of a set of English copies of the *Enquiry*, by one who had zealous private friends there, was Goldsmith's not unreasonable feeling; and he would try this, when the time came. Meanwhile he began the work; and it was probably to some extent advanced, when, with little savings from the school, and renewed assurances of the foreign appointment, Doctor Milner released him from duties which the necessity (during the Doctor's illness) of flogging the boys as well as teaching them, had made more intolerable to the child-loving usher. The Rev. Mr. Mitford knew a lady whose husband had been at this time under Goldsmith's cane; with no very serious consequence.

Escape from the school might not have been so easy, but for the lessening chances of Doctor Milner's recovery making more permanent arrangements advisable. Some doubt has been expressed indeed, whether the worthy schoolmaster's illness had not already ended fatally; and if the kindness I have recorded should not rather be attributed to his son and successor in the school, Mr. George Milner. But other circumstances clearly invalidate this. In August 1758, Goldsmith again claimed facilities for decent correspondence, among the Graingers and Kippises and other tavern acquaintance, at the Temple Exchange Coffee House, Temple Bar.

Grainger, his friend Percy, and others of the Griffiths' connection, were at this time busy with a new magazine: begun with the present year, and dedicated to the 'great Mr. Pitt,' whose successful coercion of the king made him just now more than ever the darling of the people. Griffiths was one of the publishing partners in *The Grand Magazine of Universal Intelligence and Monthly Chronicle of our own Times*: and perhaps on this account, as well as for the known contributions of some of his acquaintance, traces of Goldsmith's hand have been sought in the work: in my opinion without success. In truth the first number was hardly out when he went back to the Peckham school; and on his return to London, though he probably eked out his poor savings by casual writings here and there, it is certain that on the foreign appointment his hopes continued steadily fixed, and that the work which was to aid him in his escape from literature (the completion of the *Enquiry into the State of Polite Learning*, or, as he called it before publication, the *Essay on the Present State of Taste and Literature*), occupied nearly all his thoughts. He was again in London, and again working with the pen; but he was no longer the bookseller's slave, nor was literary toil his impassable and hopeless doom. Therefore, in the confidence of swift liberation, and the hope of the new career that brightened in his sanguine heart, he addressed himself cheerily enough to the design in hand, and began solicitation of his Irish friends.

Edward Mills he thought of first, as a person of some

influence. He was his relative, had been his fellow-collegian, and was a prosperous, wealthy man. 'Dear Sir,' he begins, in a letter dated from the Temple Exchange Coffee House, on the 7th August, and discovered by Bishop Percy,

"You have quitted, I find, that plan of life which you once intended to pursue, and given up ambition for domestic tranquillity. Were I to consult your satisfaction alone in this change, I have the utmost reason to congratulate your choice; but when I consider my own, I cannot avoid feeling some regret that one of my few friends has declined a pursuit in which he had every reason to expect success. The truth is, like the rest of the world, I am self-interested in my concern; and do not so much consider the happiness you have acquired as the honour I have probably lost in the change. I have often let my fancy loose when you were the subject, and have imagined you gracing the bench, or thundering at the bar; while I have taken no small pride to myself, and whispered all that I could come near that this was my cousin. Instead of this, it seems you are merely contented to be a happy man; to be esteemed only by your acquaintance; to cultivate your paternal acres; to take unmolested a nap under one of your own hawthorns, or in Mrs. Mills' bedchamber, which even a poet must confess is rather the more comfortable place of the two. But however your resolutions may be altered with regard to your situation in life, I persuade myself they are unalterable with respect to your friends in it. I cannot think the world has taken such entire possession of that heart (once so susceptible of friendship), as not to have left a corner there for a friend or two; but I flatter myself that even I have my place among the number. This I have a claim to from the similitude of our dispositions; or setting that aside, I can demand it as a right by the most equitable law in nature: I mean that of

retaliation : for indeed you have more than your share in mine. I am a man of few professions ; and yet this very instant I cannot avoid the painful apprehension that my present professions (which speak not half my feelings) should be considered only a pretext to cover a request, as I have a request to make. No, my dear Ned, I know you are too generous to think so ; and you know me too proud to stoop to unnecessary insincerity. I have a request, it is true, to make ; but as I know to whom I am a petitioner, I make it without diffidence or confusion. It is in short this : I am going to publish a book in London, entitled *An Essay on the Present State of Taste and Literature in Europe*. Every work published here, the printers in Ireland republish without giving the author the least consideration for his copy. I would in this respect disappoint their avarice, and have all the additional advantages that may result from the sale of my performance there, to myself. The book is now printing in London ; and I have requested Dr. Radcliff, Mr. Lawder, Mr. Bryanton, my brother Mr. Henry Goldsmith, and brother-in-law Mr. Hodson, to circulate my proposals among their acquaintance. The same request I now make to you ; and have accordingly given directions to Mr. Bradley, bookseller in Dame-street, Dublin, to send you a hundred proposals. Whatever subscriptions pursuant to those proposals, you may receive, when collected may be transmitted to Mr. Bradley, who will give a receipt for the money, and be accountable for the books. I shall not, by a paltry apology, excuse myself for putting you to this trouble. Were I not convinced that you found more pleasure in doing good-natured things than uneasiness in being employed in them, I should not have singled you out on this occasion. It is probable you would comply with such a request if it tended to the encouragement of any man of learning whatsoever ; what then, may not he expect who has claims of family and friendship to enforce his ? I am, dear Sir, your sincere friend and humble servant,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

What indeed may he not freely expect, who is to receive nothing! Nevertheless, there is a worse fool's paradise than that of expectation. To teach our tears the easiest way to flow, should be no unvalued part of this world's wisdom: Hope is a good friend, even when the only one: and Goldsmith was not the worse for expecting, though he received nothing. Mr. Mills left his poor requests unheeded, and his letter unacknowledged. Sharking booksellers and starving authors might devour each other before he would interpose; being a man, as his old sizar-relative delicately hinted, with paternal acres as well as boyish friendships to cultivate, and fewer thorns of the world to struggle with, than hawthorns of his own to sleep under. He lived to repent it certainly, and to profess great veneration for the distinguished writer to whom he boasted relationship; but Goldsmith had no more pleasant hopes or friendly correspondences to fling away upon Mr. Mills of Roscommon. Not that even this letter, as it seems to me, had been one of very confident expectation. Unusual effort is manifest in it; a reluctance to bring unseemly fancies between the wind and Mr. Mills' gentility; a conventional style of balance between the 'pleasure' and the 'uneasiness' it talks about; in short, a forced suppression of everything in his own state that may affront the acres and the hawthorns.

Seven days afterward he wrote to Bryanton, with a curious contrast of tone and manner. Even Bryanton had not inquired for him since the scenes of happier years.

The affectionate rememberings of the lonely wanderer, as of the struggling author, he had in carelessness, if not in coldness, passed without return. Yet here heart spoke to heart; buoyant, unreserved, and sanguine. That sorrow lay beneath the greetings, was not to be concealed; else had the words which cheerily rose above it, been less sincere. But see, and make profit of it: how, depressed by unavailing labours, and patiently awaiting the disastrous issue of defeat and flight, he shows to the last a bright and cordial happiness of soul, unconquered and unconquerable.

‘I have heard it remarked,’ he begins, in a letter also dated from the Temple Coffee House, which Mr. Prior obtained from Bryanton’s son-in-law the Rev. Doctor Handcock, and in which, where the paper is torn or has been worn away by time, there are several erasures the reader will easily supply,

“I believe by yourself, that they who are drunk, or out of their wits, fancy every body else in the same condition. Mine is a friendship that neither distance nor time can efface, which is probably the reason that, for the soul of me, I can’t avoid thinking yours of the same complexion; and yet I have many reasons for being of a contrary opinion, else why in so long an absence was I never made a partner in your concerns? To hear of your successes would have given me the utmost pleasure; and a communication of your very disappointments would divide the uneasiness I too frequently feel for my own. Indeed, my dear Bob, you don’t conceive how unkindly you have treated one whose circumstances afford him few prospects of pleasure, except those reflected from the happiness of his friends. However, since you have not let me hear from you, I



have in some measure disappointed your neglect by frequently thinking of you. Every day do I remember the calm anecdotes of your life, from the fireside to the easy-chair : recall the various adventures that first cemented our friendship ; the school, the college, or the tavern : preside in fancy over your cards : and am displeased at your bad play when the rubber goes against you, though not with all that agony of soul as when I once was your partner. Is it not strange that two of such like affections should be so much separated and so differently employed as we are ? You seem placed at the centre of fortune's wheel, and, let it revolve never so fast, are insensible of the motion. I seem to have been tied to the circumference, and . . . disagreeably round like a whore in a whirl-igig . . . down with an intention to chide, and yet methinks . . . my resentment already. The truth is, I am a . . . regard to you : I may attempt to bluster . . . . Anacreon, my heart is respondent only to softer affections. And yet, now I think on 't again, I will be angry. God's curse, sir ! who am I ? Eh ! what am I ? Do you know whom you have offended ? A man whose character may one of these days be mentioned with profound respect in a German Comment or Dutch Dictionary ; whose name you will probably hear ushered in by a Doctissimus Doctissimorum, or heel-pieced with a long Latin termination. Think how Goldsmithius, or Gubblegurchius, or some such sound, as rough as a nutmeg-grater, will become me. Think of that ! God's curse, sir ! who am I ? I must own my ill-natured contemporaries have not hitherto paid me those honours I have had such just reason to expect. I have not yet seen my face reflected in all the lively display of red and white paints on any sign-posts in the suburbs. Your handkerchief weavers seem as yet unacquainted with my merits or my physiognomy, and the very snuff-box makers appear to have forgot their respect. Tell them all from me, they are a set of Gothic, barbarous, ignorant scoundrels. There will come a day, no doubt it will : I beg you

may live a couple of hundred years longer, only to see the day : when the Scaligers and Daciers will vindicate my character, give learned editions of my labours, and bless the times with copious comments on the text. You shall see how they will fish up the heavy scoundrels who disregard me now, or will then offer to cavil at my productions. How will they bewail the times that suffered so much genius to lie neglected ! If ever my works find their way to Tartary or China, I know the consequence. Suppose one of your Chinese Owanowitzers instructing one of your Tartarian Chianobacchhi. You see I use Chinese names to show my own erudition, as I shall soon make our Chinese talk like an Englishman to show his. This may be the subject of the lecture : *Oliver Goldsmith flourished in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He lived to be an hundred and three years old . . . . age may justly be styled the sun of . . . . and the Confucius of Europe . . . . . learned world, were anonymous, and have probably been lost, because united with those of others. The first avowed piece the world has of his, is entitled an ' Essay on the Present State of Taste and Literature in Europe ;' a work well worth its weight in diamonds. In this he profoundly explains what learning is, and what learning is not. In this he proves that blockheads are not men of wit, and yet that men of wit are actually blockheads.* But as I choose neither to tire my Chinese Philosopher, nor you, nor myself, I must discontinue the oration, in order to give you a good pause for admiration ; and I find myself most violently disposed to admire too. Let me, then, stop my fancy to take a view of my future self ; and, as the boys say, light down to see myself on horseback. Well, now I am down, where the devil is I ? OH GODS ! GODS ! HERE IN A GARRET, WRITING FOR BREAD, AND EXPECTING TO BE DUNNED FOR A MILKSCORE ! However, dear Bob, whether in penury or affluence, serious or gay, I am ever wholly thine, OLIVER GOLDSMITH. Give my ; no, not compliments neither ; but something . . . most warm and

sincere wish that you can conceive, to your mother Mrs. Bryanton, to Miss Bryanton, to yourself ; and if there be a favourite dog in the family, let me be remembered to it."

IN A GARRET, WRITING FOR BREAD, AND EXPECTING TO BE DUNNED FOR A MILK-SCORE. The ordinary fate of Letters in that age. There had been a Christian religion extant for now seventeen hundred and fifty-seven years ; for so long a time had the world been acquainted with its spiritual responsibilities and necessities ; yet here, in the middle of the eighteenth century, was the one common eminence conceded to the spiritual teacher, the man who comes upon the earth to lift his fellow-men above its miry ways. Up in a garret, writing for bread he cannot get, and dunned for a milk-score he cannot pay. And age after age, the comfortable prosperous man sees it ; and calls for water and washes his hands of it ; and is glad to think it no business of his ; and in that year of grace and of Goldsmith's suffering, had doubtless adorned his dining-room with the *Distrest Poet* of the inimitable Mr. Hogarth, and invited laughter from easy guests at the garret and the milk-score. Yet could they have known the danger to even their worldliest comforts, then impending, perhaps they had not laughed so heartily. For were not those very citizens to be indebted to Goldsmith in after years : for cheerful hours, and happy thoughts, and fancies that would smooth life's path to their children's children ? And now, without a friend, with hardly bread to eat, and uncheered by a hearty word or a smile to help him on, he sits in his

melancholy garret, and those fancies die within him. It is but an accident now, that the good *Vicar* shall be born ; that the *Gentleman in Black* shall dispense his charities ; that *Croaker* shall grieve ; *Tony Lumpkin* laugh ; or the



sweet soft echo of the *Deserted Village* come always back upon the heart, in charity, and kindness, and sympathy with the poor. For, Despair is in the garret ;

and the poet, overmastered by distress, seeks only the means of flight and exile. With a

day-dream to his old Irish playfellow, a sigh for the 'heavy scoundrels' who disregard him, and a wail for the age to which genius is a mark of mockery ; he turns to that first avowed piece, which, being also his last, is to prove that 'blockheads are not men of wit, and yet that 'men of wit are actually blockheads.'

A proposition which men of wit have laboured at from early times; have proved in theory and worked out in practice. 'How many base men,' shrieked one of them in Elizabeth's day, who felt that his wit had but made him the greater blockhead; 'how many base men that want 'those parts I have, do enjoy content at will, and have 'wealth at command! I call to mind a cobbler, that is 'worth five hundred pounds; an hostler, that has built a 'goodly inn; a carman in a leather pilche, that has 'whipt a thousand pounds out of his horse's tail: and I 'ask if I have more than these. Am I not better born? 'am I not better brought up? yea, and better favoured! 'And yet am I for ever to sit up late, and rise early, and 'contend with the cold, and converse with scarcity, and 'be a beggar? How am I crossed, or whence is this 'curse, that a scrivener should be better paid than a 'scholar!' Poor Nash! he had not even Goldsmith's fortitude, and his doleful outcry for money was a lamentable exhibition, out of which no good could come. But the feeling in the miserable man's heart, struck at the root of a secret discontent which not the strongest men can resist altogether; and which Goldsmith did not affect to repress, when he found himself, as he says, 'starving in those streets where Butler and Otway starved 'before him.'

The words are in a letter, written the day after that to Bryanton, bearing the same date of Temple Exchange Coffee House, and sent to Mrs. Lauder; the Jane Contarine

of his happy old Kilmore time. Mr. Mills afterward begged this letter of the Lauders, and from the friend to whom he gave it, Lord Carleton's nephew, it was copied for Bishop Percy by Edmond Malone. As in those already given, the style, with its simple air of authorship, is eminently good and happy. The assumption of a kind of sturdy independence, the playful admission of well-known faults, and the incidental slight confession of sorrows; have graceful relation to the person addressed, and the terms on which they stood of old. His uncle was now in a hopeless state of living death, from which, in a few months, the grave released him; and to this the letter affectingly refers.

“If you should ask,” it began, “why, in an interval of so many years, you never heard from me, permit me, Madam, to ask the same question. I have the best excuse in recrimination. I wrote to Kilmore from Leyden in Holland, from Louvain in Flanders, and Rouen in France, but received no answer. To what could I attribute this silence but to displeasure or forgetfulness? Whether I was right in my conjecture I do not pretend to determine; but this I must ingenuously own, that I have a thousand times in my turn endeavoured to forget *them*, whom I could not but look upon as forgetting *me*. I have attempted to blot their names from my memory, and, I confess it, spent whole days in efforts to tear their image from my heart. Could I have succeeded, you had not now been troubled with this renewal of a discontinued correspondence; but, as every effort the restless make to procure sleep serves but to keep them waking, all my attempts contributed to impress what I would forget deeper on my imagination. But this subject I would willingly turn from, and

yet, 'for the soul of me,' I can't till I have said all. I was, Madam, when I discontinued writing to Kilmore, in such circumstances, that all my endeavours to continue your regards might be attributed to wrong motives. My letters might be looked upon as the petitions of a beggar, and not the offerings of a friend ; while all my professions, instead of being considered as the result of disinterested esteem, might be ascribed to venal insincerity. I believe, indeed, you had too much generosity to place them in such a light, but I could not bear even the shadow of such a suspicion. The most delicate friendships are always most sensible of the slightest invasion, and the strongest jealousy is ever attendant on the warmest regard. I could not . . . I own I could not . . . continue a correspondence in which every acknowledgment for past favours might be considered as an indirect request for future ones ; and where it might be thought I gave my heart from a motive of gratitude alone, when I was conscious of having bestowed it on much more disinterested principles. It is true, this conduct might have been simple enough ; but yourself must confess it was in character. Those who know me at all, know that I have always been actuated by different principles from the rest of mankind ; and while none regarded the interest of his friend more, no man on earth regarded his own less. I have often affected bluntness to avoid the imputation of flattery ; have frequently seemed to overlook those merits too obvious to escape notice, and pretended disregard to those instances of good nature and good sense, which I could not fail tacitly to applaud ; and all this lest I should be ranked among the grinning tribe, who say 'very true' to all that is said ; who fill a vacant chair at a tea-table ; whose narrow souls never moved in a wider circle than the circumference of a guinea ; and who had rather be reckoning the money in your pocket than the virtue of your breast. All this, I say, I have done, and a thousand other very silly, though very disinterested, things in my time ; and for all which no soul cares a farthing about me.

God's curse, Madam ! is it to be wondered that he should once in his life forget you, who has been all his life forgetting himself ? However, it is probable you may one of these days see me turned into a perfect hunk, and as dark and intricate as a mouse-hole. I have already given my landlady orders for an entire reform in the state of my finances. I declaim against hot suppers, drink less sugar in my tea, and check my grate with brick-bats. Instead of hanging my room with pictures, I intend to adorn it with maxims of frugality. Those will make pretty furniture enough, and won't be a bit too expensive ; for I will draw them all out with my own hands, and my landlady's daughter shall frame them with the parings of my black waistcoat. Each maxim is to be inscribed on a sheet of clean paper, and wrote with my best pen ; of which the following will serve as a specimen. *Look sharp : Mind the main chance : Money is money now : If you have a thousand pounds you can put your hands by your sides, and say you are worth a thousand pounds every day of the year : Take a farthing from a hundred and it will be a hundred no longer.* Thus, which way soever I turn my eyes, they are sure to meet one of those friendly monitors ; and as we are told of an actor who hung his room round with looking-glass to correct the defects of his person, my apartment shall be furnished in a peculiar manner, to correct the errors of my mind. Faith ! Madam, I heartily wish to be rich, if it were only for this reason, to say without a blush how much I esteem you. But, alas ! I have many a fatigue to encounter before that happy time comes, when your poor old simple friend may again give a loose to the luxuriance of his nature ; sitting by Kilmore fire-side, recount the various adventures of a hard-fought life ; laugh over the follies of the day ; join his flute to your harpsichord ; and forget that ever he starved in those streets where Butler and Otway starved before him. And now I mention those great names . . . my Uncle ! he is no more that soul of fire as when once I knew him. Newton and Swift grew dim with



age as well as he. But what shall I say? His mind was too active an inhabitant not to disorder the feeble mansion of its abode: for the richest jewels soonest wear their settings. Yet who but the fool would lament his condition! He now forgets the calamities of life. Perhaps indulgent Heaven has given him a foretaste of that tranquillity here, which he so well deserves hereafter . . . . But I must come to business; for business, as one of my maxims tells me, must be minded or lost. I am going to publish in London, a book entitled *The Present State of Taste and Literature in Europe*. The booksellers in Ireland republish every performance there without making the author any consideration. I would, in this respect, disappoint their avarice, and have all the profits of my labour to myself. I must therefore request Mr. Lauder to circulate among his friends and acquaintances a hundred of my proposals, which I have given the bookseller, Mr. Bradley in Dame Street, directions to send to him. If, in pursuance of such circulation, he should receive any subscriptions, I entreat, when collected, they may be sent to Mr. Bradley, as aforesaid, who will give a receipt, and be accountable for the work, or a return of the subscription. If this request (which, if it be complied with, will in some measure be an encouragement to a man of learning) should be disagreeable or troublesome, I would not press it; for I would be the last man on earth to have my labours go a-begging; but if I know Mr. Lauder (and sure I ought to know him), he will accept the employment with pleasure. All I can say . . . if he writes a book, I will get him two hundred subscribers, and those of the best wits in Europe. Whether this request is complied with or not, I shall not be uneasy; but there is one petition I must make to him and to you, which I solicit with the warmest ardour, and in which I cannot bear a refusal. I mean, dear Madam, that I may be allowed to subscribe myself, your ever affectionate and obliged kinsman, OLIVER GOLDSMITH. Now see how I blot and blunder, when I am asking a favour."

In none of these letters, it will be observed, is allusion made to the expected appointment. To make jesting boast of a visionary influence with two hundred of the best wits in Europe, was pleasanter than to make grave confession of himself, as a wit taking sudden flight from the scene of defeat and failure. It was the old besetting weakness. But shortly after the date of the last letter, the appointment was received. It was that of medical officer to one of the factories on the coast of Coromandel; was forwarded by Doctor Milner's friend, Mr. Jones, an East India Director; and the worthy schoolmaster did not outlive more than a few weeks this honest redemption of his promise. It was now necessary that the matter should be broken to his Irish friends; and he wrote to his brother Henry. The letter is lost; but some passages of one of nearly the same date to Mr. Hodson, have had a better fortune.

'Dear Sir,' it began, in obvious allusion to some staid and rather gratuitous reproach from the prosperous brother-in-law, 'You cannot expect regularity in one who is 'regular in nothing. Nay, were I forced to love you by 'rule, I dare venture to say I could never do it sincerely. 'Take me, then, with all my faults. Let me write when I 'please; for you see I say what I please, and am only think- 'ing aloud when writing to you. I suppose you have heard 'of my intention of going to the East Indies. The place 'of my destination is one of the factories on the coast of 'Coromandel, and I go in quality of physician and surgeon;

‘for which the Company has signed my warrant, which  
‘has already cost me ten pounds. I must also pay fifty  
‘pounds for my passage, and ten pounds for my sea stores ;  
‘and the other incidental expenses of my equipment will  
‘amount to sixty or seventy pounds more. The salary  
‘is but trifling, namely a hundred pounds a year ;  
‘but the other advantages, if a person be prudent, are  
‘considerable. The practice of the place, if I am rightly  
‘informed, generally amounts to not less than a thousand  
‘pounds a year, for which the appointed physician  
‘has an exclusive privilege. This, with the advantages  
‘resulting from trade, and the high interest which money  
‘bears (namely twenty per cent), are the inducements  
‘which persuade me to undergo the fatigues of sea, the  
‘dangers of war, and the still greater dangers of the  
‘climate ; which induce me to leave a place where I am  
‘every day gaining friends and esteem, and where I  
‘might enjoy all the conveniences of life.’

The time for fine clothes had not come ; but the same weakness prompted fine words, in that hour of dire extremity. Of the ‘friends and esteem’ he was gaining ; of the ‘conveniences of life’ that were awaiting him to enjoy ; these pages have told, and have more to tell. But why, in the confident hope of brighter days, dwell on the darkness of the past ? or show the squalor that still surrounded him ? Of already sufficiently low esteem were wit and intellect in Ireland, to give purse-fed ignorance another triumph over them, or again needlessly invite to

himself the contempts and sneers of old. Yet, though the sadness he almost wholly suppressed while the appointment was but in expectation, there was now less reason to indulge; to seem other than he was, even thus, was an effort far from successful, and marked with a somewhat painful distraction of feeling and phrase this letter to Mr. Hodson.

“I am certainly wrong,” he continues, “not to be contented with what I already possess, trifling as it is; for should I ask myself one serious question, what is it I want? what can I answer. My desires are as capricious as the big-bellied woman’s, who longed for a piece of her husband’s nose. I have no certainty, it is true; but why cannot I do as some men of more merit, who have lived on more precarious terms? Scarron used jestingly to call himself the Marquis of Quenault, which was the name of the bookseller who employed him; and why may not I assert my privilege and quality on the same pretensions? Yet, upon deliberation, whatever airs I give myself on this side of the water, my dignity, I fancy, would be evaporated before I reached the other. I know you have in Ireland a very indifferent idea of a man who writes for bread, though Swift and Steele did so in the earliest part of their lives. You imagine, I suppose, that every author by profession lives in a garret, wears shabby clothes, and converses with the meanest company. Yet I do not believe there is one single writer who has abilities to translate a French novel, that does not keep better company, wear finer cloths, and live more genteelly, than many who pride themselves for nothing else in Ireland. I confess it again, my dear Dan, that nothing but the wildest ambition could prevail on me to leave the enjoyment of the refined conversation which I am sometimes permitted to partake in, for uncertain fortune and paltry show.

You cannot conceive how I am sometimes divided. To leave all that is dear to me gives me pain ; but when I consider I may possibly acquire a genteel independance for life ; when I think of that dignity which philosophy claims, to raise itself above contempt and ridicule ; when I think thus, I eagerly long to embrace every opportunity of separating myself from the vulgar, as much in my circumstances as I am already in my sentiments. I am going to publish a book, for an account of which I refer you to a letter which I wrote to my brother Goldsmith. Circulate for me among your acquaintances a hundred proposals, which I have given orders may be sent to you ; and if, in pursuance of such circulation, you should receive any subscriptions, let them, when collected, be transmitted to Mr. Bradley, who will give you a receipt for the same. I know not how my desire of seeing Ireland, which had so long slept, has again revived with so much ardour. So weak is my temper, and so unsteady, that I am frequently tempted, particularly when low spirited, to return home and leave my fortune, though just beginning to look kinder. But it shall not be. In five or six years I expect to indulge these transports. I find I want constitution, and a strong steady disposition, which alone makes men great. I will, however, correct my faults, since I am conscious of them."

With such professions weakness continues to indulge itself, and faults are perpetuated. But great allowances are due. Of the state of Irish society, which he knew so well and so often sarcastically painted, these Irish friends, and the circle he addressed through them, were clearly very notable specimens : his prosperous brother-in-law, for whom his youth had been embittered with loss and worldly disadvantage, and whose most solid repayment of help came in shape of a prudent maxim or news of an abortive

subscription, being perhaps the best of them. The rest, careless, yet suspicious; vain, whether rich or poor; extravagant in everything but honourable action; pretending, vulgar; and priding themselves on nothing so much as the keeping better company, wearing finer clothes, and living more genteely, than their neighbours. Among such there was little chance of decent consideration, truly, if a garret, shabby clothes, and conversation with the meanest company, were set seriously and hopelessly forth as his only and inextricable doom. The real error lay in the giving faith of any kind to this external aid; since it weakened the help that rested in himself. When the claim of ten pounds for his appointment-warrant came upon him, it found him less prepared because of vague expectations raised on these letters to Mills and the Lauders. But any delay might be fatal; and in that condition of extremity, whose 'wants,' alas, are anything but 'capricious,' he bethought him of the *Critical Review*, saw promise in its rivalry to Griffiths, and went to its proprietor Mr. Archibald Hamilton.

The bookseller, who had just made a large fortune out of Smollett's *History*, was a shrewd man, and perhaps already conscious of the value of Griffiths' discarded writer. He made him a small advance, and received three papers for the *Critical*. One appeared before the close of the year, and the others were in the new year number. All three had relation to a special subject; and, as connected with such a man's obscurest fortunes,

have an interest hardly less than that of writings connected with his fame. An author is seen in the effulgence of established repute, or discovered by the cries of struggling distress. By both 'you shall know 'him.'

Ovid was the leading topic in all three. His *Fasti*, translated by a silly schoolmaster named Massey; his *Epistles*, translated by a pedantic pedagogue named Barrett; and an antidote to his *Art of Love*, in an *Art of Pleasing* by Mr. Marriott; were the matters taken in hand. The *Art of Pleasing* so far suggested comparison with the Roman poet, 'that as one performance of Ovid 'was styled *Tristia* from the subject, Mr. Marriott's production should be styled *Tristia* from the execution;' while the English *Fasti* induced not only hearty sorrow 'that our poor friend, Ovid, should send his *Sacred Calendar* to us by the hands of Mr. William Massey, 'who, like an ignorant footman, has entirely forgot his 'master's message, and substituted another in its room 'very unlike it,' but a hope not less hearty that the said Mr. Massey 'would not for the future injure those poor 'ancients who never injured him, by pestering the world 'with translations that even his own schoolboys should 'be whipped for.' Nor with less just severity was the last of these unhappy gentlemen rebuked. With very lively power he dissected the absurdities of the English version of his poor classical friend's *Epistles*: a classic to all appearance, doomed, he humorously interposed, 'to success

‘ in *Metamorphoses* : being sometimes transposed by  
‘ schoolmasters unacquainted with English, and sometimes  
‘ transversed by ladies unacquainted with Latin : alter-  
‘ nately wearing the dress of a pedant or a rake, and  
‘ either crawling in humble prose or having hints ex-  
‘ plained into unbashful meaning.’ He shewed that Mr.  
Barrett was a bad critic, and no poet ; and he passed from  
lofty to low in his illustrations, with very amusing effect.  
‘ Parenthetically clapping one sentence within another,’  
seemed Mr. Barrett’s great accomplishment ; and this, said  
Goldsmith, ‘ contributes not a little to obscurity ; and  
‘ obscurity, we all know, is nearly allied to admiration.  
‘ Thus, when the reader begins a sentence which he finds  
‘ pregnant with another, which still teems with a third,  
‘ and so on, he feels the same surprise which a country-  
‘ man does at Bartholomew fair. Hocus shows a bag, in  
‘ appearance empty ; slap, and out come a dozen new laid  
‘ eggs ; slap again, and the number is doubled ; but what  
‘ is his amazement, when it swells with the hen that laid  
‘ them !’ The poetry and criticism disposed of, the  
scholarship shared their fate. Mr. Barrett being master  
of the thriving grammar-school of Ashford in Kent, and  
having the consequence and pretension of a so-called  
learned man, ‘ we are not going,’ said Goldsmith, ‘ to  
‘ permit an ostentation of learning to pass for merit, nor  
‘ to give a pedant quarter on the score of his industry,  
‘ even though he took refuge behind Arabic, and pow-  
‘ dered his hair with Hieroglyphics.’



In the garret of Griffiths, he would hardly have conceded so much ; and since then, the world had not been teaching him literary charity. These Ovid translations had not unnaturally turned his thoughts upon the master of the art ; on him who was the father of authorship by profession ; and the melancholy image which rose to a mind so strongly disposed to entertain it then, of great '*Dryden ever poor,*' and obliged by his '*miserics*' to suffer '*fleeting performances*' to be '*quartered on the*' '*lasting merit of his name,*' did not the more entitle to any mercy which truth could not challenge for them, these gentlemen of a more thriving profession who had thrust themselves uninvited and unqualified on the barren land of authorship. '*But let not the reader imagine,*' he said, '*we can find pleasure in thus exposing absurdities,*' '*which are too ludicrous for serious reproof.* While we '*censure as critics we feel as men ; and could sincerely*' '*wish that those whose greatest sin is perhaps the venial*' '*one of writing bad verses, would regard their failure in*' '*this respect as we do, not as faults but foibles : they may*' '*be good and useful members of society, without being*' '*poets.* For who that has a regard for the public, for the '*literary honour of our country, for the figure we shall*' '*one day make among posterity, would not choose to*' '*see such humbled as are possessed only of talents that*' '*might have made good cobblers, had fortune turned*' '*them to trade ? The regions of taste can be travelled*' '*only by a few, and even those often find indifferent*

‘accommodation by the way. Let such as have not got a  
‘passport from nature be content with happiness, and  
‘leave the poet the unrivalled possession of his misery,  
‘his garret, and his fame. We have of late seen the  
‘republic of letters crowded with some, who have no other  
‘pretensions to applause but industry, who have no other  
‘merit but that of reading many books and making long  
‘quotations : these we have heard extolled by sympathetic  
‘dunces, and have seen them carry off the rewards of  
‘genius : while others, who should have been born in  
‘better days, felt all the wants of poverty, and the agonies  
‘of contempt.’ So will truth force its way, when out of  
Irish hearing. The friends, the esteem, and the conven-  
iences, of the poet’s life, are briefly summed up here.  
His misery, his garret, and his fame.

With part of the money received from Hamilton he moved into new lodgings : took ‘unrivalled possession’ of a fresh garret, on a first floor. The house was number twelve, Green Arbour Court, Fleet Street : between the Old Bailey and the site of Fleet Market : and stood in the right hand corner of the Court, as the wayfarer approached it from Farringdon Street by an appropriate access of ‘Break-neck Steps.’ Green Arbour Court is now gone for ever ; its miserable wretchedness was replaced by the decent comfort of a stable. The houses, crumbling and tumbling in Goldsmith’s day, were fairly rotted down some twelve or fifteen years since ; and it became necessary, for safety sake, to remove what time had spared. But

Mr. Washington Irving saw them first, and with reverence had described them, for Goldsmith's sake. Through alleys, courts, and blind passages; traversing Fleet Market, and thence turning along a narrow street to the bottom of a long steep flight of stone steps; he made good his toilsome way up into Green Arbour Court. He found it a small square of tall and miserable houses, the very intestines of which seemed turned inside out, to judge from the old garments and frippery that fluttered from every window. 'It appeared' he says, in his *Tales of a Traveller*, 'to be a region of washerwomen, and lines were stretched about the little square, on which clothes were dangling to dry.' The disputed right to a wash-tub was going on when he entered; heads in mob-caps were protruded from every window; and the loud clatter of vulgar tongues was assisted by the shrill pipes of swarming children, nestled and cradled in every procreant chamber of the hive. The whole scene, in short, was one of whose unchanged resemblance to the scenes of former days I have since found curious corroboration, in a magazine engraving of the place nigh half a century old. Here were the tall faded houses, with heads out of window at every story; the dirty neglected children; the bawling slipshod women; in one corner, clothes hanging to dry, and in another the cure of smoky chimneys announced. Without question, the same squalid, squalling colony, which it then was, it had been in Goldsmith's time. He would compromise with the children for occasional cessation of their noise, by a tune upon his flute, for which all

the court assembled ; every night, he would risk his neck at those steep stone stairs ; every day, for his clothes had become too ragged to submit to daylight scrutiny, he would keep within his dirty, naked, unfurnished room,



with its single wooden chair and window bench. And that was Goldsmith's home.

On a certain night in the beginning of November 1758, his ascent of 'Break-neck Steps' must have had unwonted gloom. He had learnt the failure of his new hope: the Coromandel appointment was his no longer. In what way this mischance so unexpectedly occurred, it would now be hopeless to enquire. No explanation could be had from the dying Doctor Milner ; none was given by

himself ; he always afterward withheld allusion to it, with even studious care. The most likely supposition would possibly be, that failure in getting together means for his outfit with sufficient promptitude, was made convenient excuse for transferring the favour to another. That it was any failure of his own courage at the prospect of so long an exile, or that he never proposed more by his original scheme than a foreign flight for two or three years, has no other or better foundation than the Hodson letter : on which authority it would also follow, that he remained contented with what he already possessed, subdued his capricious wants, and turned to the friends, the esteem, the refined conversation, and all the conveniences of life, which awaited him in Green Arbour Court, with a new and virtuous resolve of quiet thankfulness.

Alas ! far different were the feelings with which he now ascended Break-neck Steps ; far different his mournful conviction, that but to flee from the misery that surrounded him, no office could be mean, no possible endurance hard. His determination was taken at once : probably grounded on the knowledge of some passages in the life of Smollett, and of his recent acquaintance Grainger. He would present himself at Surgeons' Hall for examination as a hospital mate : an appointment sufficiently undesirable, to be found of tolerably easy attainment by the duly qualified.

But he must have decent clothes to present himself in : the solitary suit in which he crept between the Court and the Coffee House, being only fit for service after nightfall.

He had no resource but to apply to Griffiths, with whom he had still some small existing relation, and from whom his recent acceptance at the *Critical*, increasing his value with a vulgar mind, might help in exacting aid. The bookseller, to whom the precise temporary purpose for which the clothes were wanted does not seem to have been told, consented to furnish them on certain conditions. Goldsmith was to write at once four articles (he had given three to the *Critical*) for the *Monthly Review*. Griffiths would then become security with a tailor for a new suit of clothes; which were either to be returned, or the debt for them discharged, within a given time. This pauper proposal acceded to, Goldsmith returned to Green Arbour Court with the four books under his arm.

They were: *Some Enquiries Concerning the First Inhabitants of Europe*, by Francis Wise the antiquarian, Thomas Warton's friend; *Anselm Bayly's Introduction to Languages*; the *Pentologia* of Doctor Burton; and a new *Translation of Cicero's Tusculan Disputations*. The notices of them thus extorted made due appearance in the *Monthly Review* for December 1758; the tailor was then called in; and the compact completed.

Equipped in his new suit, and with an anxious, hopeful, quaking heart, Goldsmith offered himself for examination at Surgeons' Hall on the 21st December. 'The beadle called my name,' says Roderick Random, when he found himself in similar condition at that place of torture, 'with a voice that made me tremble as much as if it had been

‘the sound of the last trumpet: however there was no remedy: I was conducted into a large hall, where I saw about a dozen of grim faces sitting at a long table, one of whom bade me come forward in such an imperious tone, that I was actually for a minute or two bereft of my senses.’ Whether the same process, conducted through a like memorable scene, bereft poor Goldsmith altogether of his, cannot now be ascertained. All that is known, is told in a dry extract from the books of the College of Surgeons. ‘*At a Court of Examiners held at the Theatre 21st December, 1758. Present*’ . . the names are not given, but there is a long list of the candidates who passed, in the midst of which these occur . . ‘*James Bernard, mate to an hospital. Oliver Goldsmith, found not qualified for ditto.*’ A rumour of this rejection long existed, and on a hint from Maton the king’s physician, Mr. Prior succeeded in discovering it.

Honour to that *Court of Examiners*, I say, to the end of time! They found him not qualified to be a surgeon’s mate, and left him qualified to heal the wounds, and abridge the sufferings, of all the world. They found him querulous with adversity, given up to irresolute fears, too much blinded with failures and sorrows to see the divine uses to which they tended still: and from all this, their stern and awful decision drove him resolutely back. While the door of the Surgeons’ Hall was shut upon him that day, the gate of the Beautiful Mountain was slowly opening. Much of the valley of the shadow he had still in-

deed to pass ; but every outlet save the one was closed upon him, it was idle any longer to strike or struggle against the visions which sprang up in his desolate path, and as he so passed steadily if not cheerily on, he saw them fade and become impalpable before him. Steadily, then, if not cheerily, for some months more. 'A man who has any 'kind of vigour,' said Johnson, 'can walk to the East as well as to the West, if he happens to turn his head that 'way.' Honour to the *Court of Examiners*, that, whether he would or would not, they turned back his head to the East ! The hopes and promise of the world have a perpetual springtime there ; and Goldsmith was hereafter to enjoy them, briefly for himself, but for the world eternally.

It was four days after the rejection, Christmas Day of 1758, when, to the ordinary filth and noise of number twelve in Green Arbour Court, there was added an unusual



lamentation and sorrow. The landlord had been suddenly dragged by bailiffs from his home on the previous night, and his poor wife with loud wailings sought the room of her poorer lodger. He was in debt to the unfortunate couple, who, for the amusement of their children by his flute, had been kind to him

according to their miserable means : and it was now



her sobbing petition that he should try to help them. There was but one way; and in the hope, through Hamilton or Griffiths, to be able still to meet the tailor's debt, the gay suit in which he went to Surgeons' Hall, and in which he was dressed for his doleful holiday, was put off and carried to the pawnbroker's. Nor had a week passed, before the pangs of his own destitution sharply struck him again; and, without other remaining means of earthly aid, for death had taken in Doctor Milner his apparently last friend, he carried the four books he had recently reviewed for Griffiths to a neighbouring house, and left them in pledge with an acquaintance for a trifling loan. It was hardly done when a letter from Griffiths was put into his hand, peremptorily demanding the return of the books and the suit of clothes, or instant payment for both.

Goldsmith's answer, and the bookseller's violent retort, are to be presumed from the poor creditor's second letter: the only one preserved of this unseemly correspondence. He appears to have written in a tone of mixed astonishment, anger, and solicitation; to have prayed for some delay; and to have been met by coarse insult, threats, and the shameless imputation of crime. These forced from him the rejoinder found in the bookseller's papers; endorsed as '*received in January 1759*'; and passed by his family into the manuscript collections of Mr. Heber. All concealment is ended now, and stern plain truth is told.

'Sir,' wrote Goldsmith, 'I know of no misery but a

‘ gaol to which my own imprudences and your letter seem  
‘ to point. I have seen it inevitable these three or four  
‘ weeks, and, by heavens ! request it as a favour ; as a favour  
‘ that may prevent somewhat more fatal. I have been  
‘ some years struggling with a wretched being ; with all  
‘ that contempt which indigence brings with it ; with all  
‘ those strong passions which make contempt insupportable.  
‘ What, then, has a gaol that is formidable ? I shall at  
‘ least have the society of wretches, and such is, to me,  
‘ true society. I tell you again and again, I am now  
‘ neither able nor willing to pay you a farthing, but I will  
‘ be punctual to any appointment you or the tailor shall  
‘ make : thus far, at least, I do not act the sharper, since,  
‘ unable to pay my debts one way, I would willingly give  
‘ some security another. No, sir, had I been a sharper,  
‘ had I been possessed of less good nature and native  
‘ generosity, I might surely now have been in better cir-  
‘ cumstances. I am guilty, I own, of meannesses which  
‘ poverty unavoidably brings with it : my reflections are  
‘ filled with repentance for my imprudence, but not with  
‘ any remorse for being a villain. That may be a character  
‘ you unjustly charge me with. Your books, I can assure  
‘ you, are neither pawned nor sold, but in the custody of  
‘ a friend from whom my necessities obliged me to borrow  
‘ some money : whatever becomes of my person, you shall  
‘ have them in a month. It is very possible both the  
‘ reports you have heard, and your own suggestions, may  
‘ have brought you false information with respect to my

‘ character : it is very possible that the man whom you now regard with detestation, may inwardly burn with grateful resentment. It is very possible that, upon a second perusal of the letter I sent you, you may see the workings of a mind strongly agitated with gratitude and jealousy. If such circumstances should appear, at least spare invective till my book with Mr. Dodsley shall be published ; and then perhaps you may see the bright side of a mind, when my professions shall not appear the dictates of necessity, but of choice. You seem to think Dr. Milner knew me not. Perhaps so ; but he was a man I shall ever honour. But I have friendships only with the dead ! I ask pardon for taking up so much time ; nor shall I add to it by any other professions than that I am, Sir, your humble servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH. I shall expect impatiently the result of your resolutions.’

Now, this Ralph Griffiths the bookseller, whom the diploma of some American university as obscure as himself made subsequently *Doctor* Ralph, was one of the most thriving men of the day. In little more than three years after this, he was able to retire from bookselling, and hand over to Becket the publication of his Review. As time wore on, he became a more and more regular attendant at the meeting-house, rose higher and higher in the world’s esteem, and at last kept his two carriages, and ‘ lived in style.’ But he lived, too, to see the changes of thirty years after the grave had received the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield* ; and though he had some recollec-

tions of the errors of his youth to disturb his decorous and religious peace of mind : such as having become the proprietor of a most infamous novel, and dictated the praise of it in his Review ; such as having exposed himself to the remark reiterated in Grainger's letter to Bishop Percy, that he was not to be trusted in any verbal agreement upon matters of his trade : it may not have been the least bitter of his remembrances, if it ever happened to occur to him, that to Oliver Goldsmith, in the depths of a helpless distress, he had applied the epithets of *sharp* and *villain*.

From Goldsmith himself they fell harmless. His letter is most affecting : but the truth is manfully outspoken in it, and for that reason it is less painful to me than those in which the truth is concealed. When such a mind is brought to look its sorrow in the face, and understand clearly the condition in which it is ; without further doubling, shrinking, or weak compromise with false hopes ; it is master of a great gain. In the accession of strength it receives, it may see the sorrow anyway increase, and calm its worst apprehension. The most touching passage of that letter is the reference to his project, and the bright side of his mind it may reveal. I will date from it the true beginning of Goldsmith's literary career. Not till he was past thirty, he was wont to say, did he become really attached to literature : not till then was the discipline of his endurance complete, his wandering impulses settled firmly to the right object of their aptitude, or his real

destiny revealed to him. He might have still to perish in unconquered difficulties, and with the word that was in him unspoken; but it would be at his post, and in a manly effort to speak the word. Whatever the personal weaknesses that yet remain, nor are they few or trifling, his confidence and self-reliance in literary pursuits date from this memorable time. They rise above the cares and cankers of his life, above the lowness of his worldly esteem, far above the squalor of his homes. They take the undying forms which accident or wrong cannot alter or deface; they are tenants of a world where distress and failure are unknown; and perpetual cheerfulness sings around them. 'The night can never endure so long, but 'at length the morning cometh;' and with these sudden and sharp disappointments of his second London Christmas, there came into Green Arbour Court the first struggling beams of morning. Till all its brightness follows, let him moan and sorrow as he may: the more familiar to himself he makes those images of want and danger, the better he will meet them in the lists where they still await him; the more he cultivates those solitary friendships with the dead, the more elevating and strengthening the influence that will reward him from their graves. The living, busy, prosperous world about him, might indeed have saved him much, by stretching forth its helping hand: but it had not taught him little in its lesson of unrequited expectation, and there was nothing now to distract him with delusive hope from meditation of the wisest form of revenge.

The 'impatient expectation' of the result of Griffiths' resolutions, ended in a contract to write him a *Life of Voltaire* for a translation of the *Henriade* he was about to publish: the payment being twenty pounds, and the price of the clothes to be deducted from that sum. His brother Henry wrote to him of the *Polite Learning* scheme, while engaged on this trade task; and the answer he made at its close, written early in February 1759, is in some sort the indication of his altered mind and purpose. There is evidence of his personal weakness in the idle distrusts and suspicion it charges on himself, and in its false pretences to conceal his rejection and sustain his poor Irish credit: yet the general tone of it marks not the less, a new, a sincerer, and a more active epoch in his life. Whilst the quarrel with Griffiths was still proceeding, he had again written of the *Polite Learning* Essay, and sent some scheme of a new poem to Henry (first fruit of the better uses of his adversity); but absolute silence as to the Coromandel appointment appears to have suggested a doubt in his brother's answer, to which very cursory and slight allusion is made in this reply. The personal portrait, in which the 'big wig' of his Bankside days plays its part, will hardly support his character for personal vanity!

"Your punctuality," the letter ran, "in answering a man whose trade is writing, is more than I had reason to expect; and yet you see me generally fill a whole sheet, which is all the recompense I can make for being so frequently troublesome. The behaviour of Mr. Mills and Mr. Lauder is a little extraordinary. However,

their answering neither you nor me, is a sufficient indication of their disliking the employment which I assigned them. As their conduct is different from what I had expected, so I have made an alteration in mine. I shall, the beginning of next month, send over two hundred and fifty books, which are all that I fancy can be well sold among you, and I would have you make some distinction in the persons who have subscribed. The money, which will amount to sixty pounds, may be left with Mr. Bradley as soon as possible. I am not certain but I shall quickly have occasion for it. I have met with no disappointment with respect to my East India voyage, nor are my resolutions altered; though at the same time, I must confess, it gives me some pain to think I am almost beginning the world at the age of thirty-one. Though I never had a day's sickness since I saw you, yet I am not that strong active man you once knew me. You scarcely can conceive how much eight years of disappointment, anguish, and study, have worn me down. If I remember right, you are seven or eight years older than me, yet I dare venture to say that if a stranger saw us both he would pay me the honours of seniority. Imagine to yourself a pale melancholy visage, with two great wrinkles between the eyebrows, with an eye disgustingly severe, and a big wig; and you may have a perfect picture of my present appearance. On the other hand, I conceive you as perfectly sleek and healthy, passing many a happy day among your own children, or those who knew you a child. Since I knew what it was to be a man, this is a pleasure I have not known. I have passed my days among a parcel of cool, designing beings, and have contracted all their suspicious manner in my own behaviour. I should actually be as unfit for the society of my friends at home, as I detest that which I am obliged to partake of here. I can now neither partake of the pleasure of a revel, nor contribute to raise its jollity. I can neither laugh nor drink; have contracted a hesitating disagreeable manner of speaking, and a visage that looks ill-

nature itself; in short, I have thought myself into a settled melancholy, and an utter disgust of all that life brings with it. Whence this romantic turn that all our family are possessed with? Whence this love for every place and every country but that in which we reside: for every occupation but our own? this desire of fortune, and yet this eagerness to dissipate? I perceive, my dear Sir, that I am, at intervals, for indulging this splenetic manner, and following my own taste, regardless of yours. The reasons you have given me for breeding up your son a scholar, are judicious and convincing: I should, however, be glad to know for what particular profession he is designed. If he be assiduous, and divested of strong passions (for passions in youth always lead to pleasure), he may do very well in your college; for it must be owned, that the industrious poor have good encouragement there, perhaps better than in any other in Europe. But if he has ambition, strong passions, and an exquisite sensibility of contempt, do not send him there, unless you have no other trade for him but your own. It is impossible to conceive how much may be done by a proper education at home. A boy for instance, who understands perfectly well, Latin, French, arithmetic, and the principles of the civil law, and can write a fine hand, has an education that may qualify him for any undertaking; and these parts of learning should be carefully inculcated, let him be designed for whatever calling he will. Above all things, let him never touch a romance or novel: these paint beauty in colours more charming than nature, and describe happiness that man never tastes. How delusive, how destructive, are those pictures of consummate bliss! They teach the youthful mind to sigh after beauty and happiness which never existed; to despise the little good which fortune has mixed in our cup, by expecting more than she ever gave; and in general, take the word of a man who has seen the world, and has studied human nature more by experience than precept, take my word for



it, I say, that books teach us very little of the world. The greatest merit in a state of poverty would only serve to make the possessor ridiculous : may distress, but cannot relieve him. Frugality, and even avarice, in the lower orders of mankind, are true ambition. These afford the only ladder for the poor to rise to preferment. Teach then, my dear Sir, to your son, thrift and economy. Let his poor wandering uncle's example be placed before his eyes. I had learned from books to be disinterested and generous, before I was taught from experience the necessity of being prudent. I had contracted the habits and notions of a philosopher, while I was exposing myself to the approaches of insidious cunning ; and often by being, even with my narrow finances, charitable to excess, I forgot the rules of justice and placed myself in the very situation of the wretch who thanked me for my bounty. When I am in the remotest part of the world, tell him this, and perhaps he may improve from my example. But I find myself again falling into my gloomy habits of thinking. My mother, I am informed, is almost blind. Even though I had the utmost inclination to return home, under such circumstances I could not ; for to behold her in distress without a capacity for relieving her from it, would add too much to my splenetic habit. Your last letter was much too short : it should have answered some queries I had made in my former. Just sit down as I do, and write forward until you have filled all your paper. It requires no thought ; at least from the ease with which my own sentiments rise when they are addressed to you. For, believe me, my head has no share in all I write : my heart dictates the whole. Pray, give my love to Bob Bryanton, and entreat him from me not to drink. My dear sir, give me some account about poor Jenny [his younger sister, who had married unprosperously]. Yet her husband loves her : if so, she cannot be unhappy. I know not whether I should tell you ; yet why should I conceal these trifles, or indeed anything from you ? There is a

book of mine will be published in a few days : the Life of a very extraordinary man : no less than the great Voltaire. You know already by the title that it is no more than a catch-penny. However, I spent but four weeks on the whole performance, for which I received twenty pounds. When published, I shall take some method of conveying it to you : unless you may think it dear of the postage, which may amount to four or five shillings. However, I fear you will not find an equivalent of amusement. Your last letter, I repeat it, was too short : you should have given me your opinion of the design of the heroi-comical poem which I sent you. You remember I intended to introduce the hero of the poem as lying in a paltry ale-house. You may take the following specimen of the manner, which I flatter myself is quite original. The room in which he lies may be described somewhat in this way :

The window, patch'd with paper, lent a ray,  
 That feebly showed the state in which he lay ;  
 The sanded floor that grits beneath the tread,  
 The humid wall with paltry pictures spread ;  
 The game of goose was there expos'd to view,  
 And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew ;  
 The Seasons, fram'd with listing, found a place,  
 And Prussia's monarch show'd his lamp-black face.  
 The morn was cold ; he views with keen desire  
 A rusty grate unconscious of a fire ;  
 An unpaid reckoning on the frieze was scored,  
 And five crack'd teacups dress'd the chimney-board.

And now imagine, after his soliloquy, the landlord to make his appearance, in order to dun him for the reckoning :

Not with that face, so servile and so gay,  
 That welcomes every stranger that can pay ;  
 With sulky eye he smok'd the patient man,  
 Then pull'd his breeches tight, and thus began .

All this is taken, you see, from Nature. It is a good remark of

Montaigne's, that the wisest men often have friends with whom they do not care how much they play the fool. Take my present follies as instances of my regard. Poetry is a much easier and more agreeable species of composition than prose ; and could a man live by it, it were not unpleasant employment to be a poet. I am resolved to leave no space, though I should fill it up only by telling you, what you know very well already. I mean that I am your most affectionate friend and brother,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

There is a practical condition of mind in this letter, notwithstanding its self-reproachful pictures, and protestations of sorrowful disgust. It is very clear, were it only by the ale-house hero's example, that not all the miseries which surround him will again daunt his perseverance, or tempt him to begin life anew. If the bowl is now to be broken, it will be broken at the fountain. Could a man live by it, it were not unpleasant employment to be a poet : but as he has made up his mind to live, and on the world's beggarly terms, he will take what practicable work he can get, and be content with its fare till pleasant employment comes. When the *Man in Black* describes the change of good humour with which he went to his precarious meals ; how he forbore rants of spleen at his situation, ceased to call down heaven and the stars to behold him dining on a half-pennyworth of radishes, taught his very companions to believe that he liked salad better than mutton, laughed when he was not in pain, took the world as it went, and read his *Tacitus* for want of more books and company ; it figures some such change

as this which I notice here. Whatever the work may be, the resolution to stick to Nature is a good and hopeful one, and will admit of wise application, and many original results.

The poem seems to have gone no further: but its cheerful hero reappeared, after some months, in a *Club of Authors*; protested that the alehouse had been his own bed-chamber often; reintroduced the description with six new lines;

Where the Red Lion flaring o'er the way,  
Invites each passing stranger that can pay;  
Where Calvert's butt, and Parson's black champagne,  
Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury Lane;  
There, in a lonely room, from bailiffs snug,  
The muse found Scroggen stretch'd beneath a rug . .

flattered himself that his work should not be of the order of your common epic poems, which come from the press like paper kites in summer; swore that people were sick of your Turnuses and Didos, and wanted an heroic description of Nature; offered, for proof of sound, and sense, and truth, and nature, in the trifling compass of ten syllables, the last of two added lines;

A night-cap deck'd his brows instead of bay,  
*A cap by night, a stocking all the day!*

and having quoted them, was so much elated and self-delighted, that he was quite unable to proceed.

Thus could Goldsmith already turn aside the sharpest edge of poverty; thus wisely consent to be Scroggen till he could be Goldsmith; in the paltry, slovenly pothouse of Drury-lane, give promise of the neat village alehouse

of Auburn ; and betake himself meanwhile to less agreeable daily duties, in a spirit that would make them, also, the not indifferent source of profit and delight.

‘Speedily will be published,’ said the *Public Advertiser* of the 7th of February 1759, ‘*Memoirs of the Life of Monsieur de Voltaire*, with critical observations on the writings of that celebrated poet, and a new *Translation of the Henriade*. Printed for R. Griffiths, in Paternoster Row.’ Nevertheless, the publication did not take place. The *Translation* was by Purdon : the poor uncertain hack, whose notoriety rests on Goldsmith’s epigram, as his hunger was, even at this time, supposed to be mainly appeased by a share of Goldsmith’s crust. It was probably not completed in time. Some months later, it appeared in a Magazine, and the *Life* was given to the public through the same bookselling channel ; but it is clear that Goldsmith, when he wrote to his brother, had really performed his share of the contract. It was but a catchpenny matter, as he called it ; yet with passages of interesting narrative as well as just remark, and gracefully written. It announces that early admiration of the genius of Voltaire and Rousseau, which he consistently maintained against some celebrated friends of his later life : it contains the best existing notice known to me of Voltaire’s residence in England : and for proof of the time at which it was written, passages might be given in exact paraphrase of the argument of his *Polite Learning* ; such sayings from the last-quoted letter to his

brother, as 'frugality in the lower orders of mankind may be considered as a substitute for ambition;' and such apophthegms from his recent sharp experience, as 'the school of misery is the school of wisdom.'

The *Polite Learning* was now completed, and passing through the press: the Dodsleys of Pall Mall, who gave Johnson ten guineas for the poem of *London*, having taken it under their charge. This too was the time when, being accidentally in company with Grainger at the Temple Exchange Coffee House, he was introduced to Thomas Percy, afterward collector of the *Reliques*, and Bishop of Dromore. Percy, who had a great love of letters and of literary men, was attracted to this new acquaintance; for before he returned to his rectory of Eastern Mauduit in Northamptonshire, he discovered his address in Green Arbour Court, and resolved to call upon him. 'I called on Goldsmith,' said the grave church dignitary, and descendant of the ancient Earls of Northumberland, when asked to relate the visit some years after his friend's death, 'in the beginning of March 1759, and found him in lodgings so poor and miserable, that I should not think it proper to mention the circumstance, if I did not consider it as the highest proof of the splendour of Doctor Goldsmith's genius and talents, that by the bare exertion of their powers, under every disadvantage of person and fortune, he could gradually emerge from such obscurity, to the enjoyment of all the comforts, and even luxuries of life, and admission

' into the best societies of London. He was writing his  
' *Enquiry* in a miserable dirty-looking room, in which  
' there was but one chair; and when, from civility, he  
' resigned it to me, he was himself obliged to sit on the  
' window. While we were conversing together, some  
' one gently tapped at the door, and being desired to  
' come in, a poor ragged little girl, of a very becoming



' demeanour, entered the room, and dropping a curtsy,  
' said, "My mama sends her compliments, and begs the  
' "favour of you to lend her a chamberpot full of coals."'

If the February number of the *Critical Review* lay by  
the reverend, startled, and long-descended visitor, perhaps  
good-natured Goldsmith, as he scraped together his

answer to that humble petition, pointed with a smile to a description of the fate of poets which he had just published there. 'There is a strong similitude,' he had said, reviewing a new edition of the *Fairy Queen*, 'between the lives of almost all our English poets. The Ordinary of Newgate, we are told, has but one story, which serves for the life of every hero that happens to come within the circle of his pastoral care; and however unworthy the resemblance appears, it may be asserted that the history of one poet might serve with as little variation for that of any other. Born of creditable parents, who gave him a pious education; in spite of all their endeavours, in spite of all the exhortations of the minister of the parish on Sundays, he turned his mind from following good things, and fell to . . . writing verses! Spenser lived poor, was reviled by the critics of the time, and died in the utmost distress.'

He was again working for Hamilton. Smollett himself had not seen his new reviewer, but the success of the Ovid papers proclaimed the value of his assistance, and sent the publisher to Green Arbour Court. He had resumed with this notice of Spenser; a discriminating proof of his appreciation of all great mastery in the divine art. Popular and practical himself, he wonders not the less at the 'Great Magician:' suddenly taken 'from the ways of the present world,' and far from Drury Lane alehouses or Auburn villages, in the sequestered remoteness of a gorgeous and luxurious fancy he thinks of Virgil, and even Homer, as moderns in comparison with



Elizabeth's Englishman : and when he wakes from this Elysium, and comes back to the ways of the world, his conclusions are, that 'no poet enlarges the imagination 'more than Spenser'; that 'Cowley was formed into 'poetry by reading him'; that Gray and Akenside have profited by their study of him ; and that 'his verses may one 'day come to be considered the standard of English poetry.' Following this review, was a notice of young Langhorne's translation of Bion's *Elegy on Adonis* ; wherein he happily contrasted the false and florid tastes of the day with the pure simplicity of the Greek. 'If a hero or poet happens 'to die with us, the whole board of elegiac poets raise 'the dismal chorus, adorn his hearse with all the paltry 'escutcheons of flattery, rise into bombast, and paint him 'at the head of thundering legions, or reining Pegasus in 'his rapid career. They are sure to strew cypress enough 'upon the bier, dress up all the muses in mourning, and 'look as dismal and sorrowful themselves as an undertaker's shop. But neither pomp nor flattery agrees with 'real affliction : it is not thus that Marcellus, even that 'Marcellus who was adopted by the emperor of the 'world, is bewailed by Propertius. His beauty, his 'strength, his milder virtues, had caught the poet's affections, and inspired his affliction. Were a person to die 'in these days, though he was never at a battle in his life, 'our elegiac writers would be sure to make one for the 'occasion.' Subsequently, and with as happy and clear a spirit, he discussed a book on *Oratory* by a Gresham

professor of rhetoric: instancing the lawyer who, on 'hearing his adversary talk of the war of Troy, the beautiful Helen, and the river Scamander, entreated the court to observe that his client was christened, not Scamander, but Simon.'

And here I will sum up briefly as I may, what remain to be noticed of these humble and unacknowledged labours in the *Critical Review*. The tone is more confident than in *The Dunciad* days; the just appreciation is the same. Obscure and depressed as the writer was, his free running hand very frankly betrays its work, amid the cramped laborious penmanship with which Smollett's big-wigged friends surrounded it. No man wishing to hide under cover of a mean fortune, was ever so easily detected. Favourite expressions, which to the end of his life continued so, are here: thoughts he had turned to happy use in his Irish letters, reappear again and again: and disguise himself for Scroggen or James Willington as he may, he cannot write from other inspiration, or with a less natural instinctive grace, than his own. The work I now refer to connects itself, for this reason, with the most brilliant to follow. The foibles and social vanities which his Chinese friend is soon with indulgent humour to correct, are here already clear to him: the false poetic taste which he will shortly supplant with his natural manly verse, he does his best thus early to weaken and expose: and the do-me-good family romances, with which the moralmongers of the day would make stand against the *Roderick*

*Randoms* and *Tom Joneses*, are thrust back from before the *Vicar's* way.

Among his reviews, then, were Murphy's *Orphan of China*; containing good-natured evidence of curiosity as to the Chinese people, and of interest in the plans of his recent reverend visitor, at that time preparing a Chinese translation for the press. . . Butler's *Remains*; in which, bemoaning the 'indigence in which the poet lived and died,' he protested with generous 'horror' at 'the want of discernment, the more than barbarous ingratitude, of his contemporaries' . . . Marriott's *Answer to the Critical Review*; containing whimsical and humorous apology for his own satirical comparisons of three months before . . . and Dunkin's *Epistle to Lord Chesterfield*; which he closed with a story of a traveller passing through the city of Burgos in Spain, who, desirous of knowing their most learned men, applied to one of the inhabitants for information. 'What,' replied the Spaniard, who happened to be a scholar, 'have you never heard of the admirable Brandellius, or the ingenious Mogusius? One the eye, and the other the heart of our university, known all over the world?' 'Never,' cried the traveller; 'but pray inform me what Brandellius is particularly remarkable for.' 'You must be very little acquainted in the republic of letters,' said the other, 'to ask such a question. Brandellius has written a most sublime panegyric on Mogusius.' 'And prithee, what has Mogusius done to deserve so great a favour?' 'He has written an excellent poem in praise of Brandel-

‘lius.’ ‘Well! and what does the public, I mean those  
‘who are out of the university, say of those mutual com-  
‘pliments?’ ‘The public are a parcel of blockheads, and  
‘all blockheads are critics, and all critics are spiders, and  
‘spiders are a set of reptiles that all the world despises.’

Noticeable, also, in recapitulation of this drudgery,  
are papers on President Goguet’s *Origin of Laws*, and  
Formey’s *Philosophical Miscellanies*, written with lively  
understanding of the characters of French and German  
intellect: on Van Egmont’s *Travels in Asia*, wherein a  
scheme of later life was shadowed forth; ‘a man shall  
‘go a hundred miles to admire a mountain, only because  
‘it was spoken of in Scripture, yet what information can  
‘be received from hearing, that Ægidius Van Egmont  
‘went up such a hill, only in order to come down again?  
‘Could we see a man set out upon this journey, not with  
‘an intent to discover rocks and rivers, but the manners,  
‘the mechanic inventions, and the imperfect learning  
‘of the inhabitants; resolved to penetrate into countries  
‘as yet little known, and eager to pry into all their  
‘secrets, with a heart not terrified at trifling dangers; if  
‘there could be found a man who could thus unite true  
‘courage with sound learning, from such a character we  
‘might expect much information:’ on Guicciardini’s  
*History of Italy*, showing considerable knowledge of  
Italian literature: on Montesquieu’s *Miscellaneous Pieces*,  
justifying, by many expressions, such rapid indication as I  
now give of his own earlier and less known performances;

‘ Cicero observes, that we behold with transport the little barren spot, or ruins of a house, in which a person celebrated for his wisdom, his valour, or his learning, lived ; when he coasted along the shore of Greece, all the heroes, statesmen, orators, philosophers, and poets of those famed republics, rose in his memory, and were present to his sight ; how much more would he have been delighted with any of their posthumous works, however inferior to what he had before seen : ’ and finally, for my summary must be brief, on Parson Hawkins’ *Miscellanies* ; where, he having before reviewed the tragedy, ‘ the Siege of *Something* ’ (whereof Boswell records a Johnsonian sneer against Garrick, at which the little man ‘ started, and twisted himself, and seemed sorely vexed ’), and the author now retorting on the reviewer, Goldsmith thus drily put the difference between himself and the reverend writer. ‘ He was for putting his own works beside Milton and Shakspeare ; he would have the delicacy of Addison, and the purity of Hawkins, talked of in the same breath ; and the reader who praises Pope’s *Rape of the Lock*, speak with like feeling of Hawkins’ *Thimble*. But we, alas ! could not so speak of Mr. Hawkins. Perhaps our malevolence in this might have been, that Mr. Hawkins stood between us and a good living : yet we can solemnly assure him, we are quite contented with our present situation in the church, are quite happy in a wife and forty pounds a year, nor have the least ambition for pluralities.’

I close this rapid account of his labours in the *Critical Review*, with a curious satire of the fashionable Family Novel of that day: the work with which the stately mother, and the boarding-school miss, were instructed to fortify themselves against the immoralities of Smollett and of Fielding. As with Jonathan Wild in the matter of Caucus, Goldsmith 'knew a better way:' and in this witty exposure of *Jemima and Louisa*, he seems preparing to make it known. The tale professed to be written by a lady, in a series of letters: and thus he described it.

"The female muse, it must be owned, has of late been tolerably fruitful. Novels written by ladies; poems, morality, essays, and letters, all written by ladies; shew that this beautiful sex are resolved to be, one way or other, the joyful mothers of children. Happy it is that the same conveyance which brings an heir to a family, shall at the same time produce a book to mend his manners; or to teach him to make love, when ripe for the occasion. Yet let not the ladies carry off all the glory of the late productions ascribed to them: it is plain by the style, and a nameless somewhat in the manner, that pretty fellows, coffee-critics, and dirty-shirted dunces, have sometimes a share in the achievement. We have detected so many of these impostors already, that for the future it is resolved to look upon every publication that shall be ascribed to a lady, as the work of one of this amphibious fraternity. Thus, by wholesome severity, many a fair creature may be prevented from writing, that cannot spell; and many a blockhead may be deterred from commencing author, that never thought. The plan of the work is as follows: Two Misses, just taken home from the boarding-school, are *prodigious* great friends, and so they tell each other their secrets by way of letter. It cannot be expected, and

truly it would be out of question, to suppose persons so young, and so very pretty, capable of writing proper English : so they transgress in this particular almost in every sentence : *you was*, and *they is*, being frequent expressions between them. In the first letter, Miss Jemima Courtly, or Mima, for shortness' sake, lets her old and intimate friend know that her mother died when she was eight years old ; that she had one brother and one sister ; with several other secrets of this kind, all delivered in the confidence of friendship. In the progress of this correspondence we find that she has been taken home for carrying on an intrigue with Horatio, a gentleman of the neighbourhood, and by means of her sister's insinuations, for she happens to be her enemy, confined to her chamber ; the father at the same time making an express prohibition against her writing love-letters for the future. This command Miss Mima breaks, and of consequence is turned out of doors : so up she gets behind a servant without a pillion, and is set down at Mrs. Weller's house, the mother of her friend Miss Fanny. Here, then, we shall leave, or rather forget her : only observing that she is happily married, as we are told in a few words towards the conclusion. We are next served up with the history of Miss Louisa Blyden ; a story no way connected with the former. Louisa is going to be married to Mr. Evanion : the nuptials, however, are interrupted by the death of Louisa's father, and at last broke off by means of a sharper, who pretends to be Miss's uncle, and takes her concerns under his direction. What need we tell *as how* the young *lovier* runs mad ; Miss is spirited away into France ; at last returns ; the sharper and his accomplices hang or drown themselves ; her lover dies ; and she, oh tragical ! keeps her chamber ! However, to console us for this calamity, there are two or three other very good matches struck up ; a great deal of money, a great deal of beauty, a world of love, and days and nights as happy as heart could desire : the old butt-end of a modern romance."

Meanwhile the Dodsleys had issued their advertisements, and the *London Chronicle* of the third of April 1759 announced the appearance, the day before, of *An Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe*. It was a very respectable, well-printed duodecimo; was without author's name on the title-page, though Goldsmith was anxious to have the authorship widely known; and had two learned mottoes. The Greek signifying that the writer esteemed philosophers, but was no friend to sophists; and the Latin, that those only should destroy buildings who could themselves build.

The first idea of the work has been seen; as it grew consolingly, like the plant in the *Picciola*, from between the hard and stony environments of a desperate fortune. Some modifications it received, as the prospects of the writer were subjected to change; and in its scope became too large for the limited materials brought to it. But it was in advance of any similar composition of the day. No one was prepared, in a treatise so grave, for a style so enchantingly graceful. To combine liveliness with learning, is thought something of a heresy still.

With any detailed account of this well-known *Enquiry*, I do not propose to detain the reader; but for illustration of the course I have taken in this memoir, some striking passages should not be overlooked; others will throw light forward on new scenes which await us; and the contents of the treatise, as found in the current collections, are wanting in much that gives interest to the



duodecimo now lying before me, the first of the Dodsley editions.

Manifest throughout the book is one over-ruling feeling, under various forms; the conviction that, in bad critics and sordid booksellers, learning has to contend with her most pernicious enemies. When he has described at the outset the wise reverence for letters which prevailed in the old Greek time: 'Learning encouraged, protected, 'honoured, and in its turn adorning, strengthening, and 'harmonizing the community:' he turns to the sophists and critics for the day of its decline. By them the ancient polite learning was in his view 'separated from 'common sense, and made the employment of speculative 'idlers. The wisest part of mankind would not be imposed upon by unintelligible jargon, nor, like the knight 'in Pantagruel, swallow a chimera for breakfast, though 'even cooked by Aristotle.' Thus he distinguished three periods in the history of ancient learning; its commencement, or the age of poets; its maturity, or the age of philosophers; and its decline, or the age of critics. *Corruptissima Respublica, plurimæ leges.* In like manner, when he turned to the consideration of the decay of modern letters, the critics are again brought up for judgment; though with a melancholy consciousness that he must himself stand at the same bar. 'This decay which criticism produces may be deplored, but can scarcely be 'remedied; as the man who writes against the critics is 'obliged to add himself to the number.' Nevertheless,

it was with manly self-assertion of attainments which raised him above the herd, that he afterward scornfully disclaimed that viler brotherhood. 'I fire with indignation  
' when I see persons wholly destitute of education and  
' genius indent to the press, and turned book-makers;  
' adding to the sin of criticism the sin of ignorance;  
' whose trade is a bad one, and who are bad workmen in  
' the trade.' So much was not to be said of his workmanship, by even the deity of *The Dunciad*; the contriver of books to be made, the master employer in the miserable craft, Griffiths himself.

And thus comes upon the scene that other arch-foe, to whom, in modern days, the literary craftsman is but minister and servant. The critic or sophist might have been contriver of all harms, while the field of mischief was his own, and limited to a lecture-room of Athens or Alexandria; but he bowed to a more potent spirit of evil when the man of Paternoster Row or the Poultry came up in later days, took literature into charitable charge, and assumed exclusive direction of laws of taste and men of learning. Drawing on a hard experience, Goldsmith depicted the precarious daily fate of the bookseller's workman: 'coming down at stated intervals to rummage the bookseller's counter for materials to work upon:' a fate which other neglects now made inevitable. 'The author,' said Goldsmith, 'unpatronised by the great, has naturally recourse to the bookseller. There cannot perhaps be imagined a combination more

‘ prejudicial to taste than this. It is the interest of the one  
‘ to allow as little for writing, and of the other to write as  
‘ much, as possible. Accordingly, tedious compilations and  
‘ periodical magazines are the result of their joint endea-  
‘ vours. In these circumstances the author bids adieu to  
‘ fame; writes for bread; and for that only, imagination is  
‘ seldom called in. He sits down to address the venal  
‘ muse with the most phlegmatic apathy; and, as we are  
‘ told of the Russian, courts his mistress by falling asleep  
‘ in her lap. His reputation never spreads in a wider  
‘ circle than that of “the trade,” who generally value him,  
‘ not for the fineness of his compositions, but the quantity  
‘ he works off in a given time. A long habit of writing  
‘ for bread thus turns the ambition of every author at last  
‘ into avarice. He finds that he has written many years,  
‘ that the public are scarcely acquainted even with his  
‘ name; he despairs of applause, and turns to profit which  
‘ invites him. He finds that money procures all those  
‘ advantages, that respect, and that ease, which he vainly  
‘ expected from fame. And thus the man, who, under  
‘ the protection of the great, might have done honour  
‘ to humanity; when only patronised by the bookseller,  
‘ becomes a thing little superior to the fellow who works  
‘ at the press.’ In connection with this unpromising  
picture, he placed ‘the two Literary Reviews and Ma-  
‘gazines without number:’ adding that, ‘were these  
‘ Monthly Reviews and Magazines frothy, pert, or absurd,  
‘ they might find some pardon; but to be dull and

‘dronish is an encroachment on the prerogative of a folio.’ For one example of the evil, he instanced the power of a single monosyllable in these productions, to express the victory over humour among us. ‘Does the poet paint the absurdities of the vulgar, then he is *low*: does he exaggerate the features of folly to render it more thoroughly ridiculous, he is then *very low*.’ And he laughingly suggested that check might possibly be given to it by some such law ‘enacted in the republic of letters as we find takes effect in the House of Commons. As no man there can show his wisdom, unless qualified by three hundred pounds a-year, so none here should possess gravity, unless his work amounted to three hundred pages.’ In other parts of the treatise he guards himself from being supposed to wish that a mere money-service, a system of flattery and beggary, should replace that of the booksellers. He would object, he says, to indigence and effrontery subjecting learning itself to the contempts incurred by its professors; but he would no more have an author draw a quill merely to take a purse, than present a pistol for the same purpose.

These passages in the *Enquiry* were startling, and not to be protected from notice by even the obscurity of the writer. They struck at the seat of a monstrous evil. ‘We must observe’ said Smollett, noticing the book in the *Critical Review*, ‘that, against his own conviction, this author has indiscriminately censured the two Reviews; confounding a work undertaken from

‘public spirit, with one supported for the sordid purposes of a bookseller. It might not become us to say more on this subject.’ The sordid bookseller was not so delicate, and said much more; calling in for the purpose the pen of Kenrick, a notorious and convicted libeller. ‘It requires a good deal of art and temper,’ said the *Monthly Review*, after objections to the whole treatise, shallow as they were severe, ‘to write consistently against the dictates of his own heart. Thus, notwithstanding our author talks so familiarly of *us*, the great, and affects to be thought to stand in the rank of patrons, we cannot help thinking that in more places than one he has betrayed in himself the man he so severely condemns for drawing his quill to take a purse. We are even so firmly convinced of this, that we dare put the question home to his conscience, whether he never experienced the unhappy situation he so feelingly describes in that of a literary understrapper? His remarking him as coming down from his garret to rummage the bookseller’s shop for materials to work upon, and the knowledge he displays of his minutest labours, give great reason to suspect’ (generous and forbearing Griffiths!) ‘he may himself have had recourse to the bad trade of bookmaking. *Fronti nulla fides*. We have heard of many a writer, who, patronised only by his bookseller, has nevertheless affected the gentleman in print, and talked full as cavalierly as our author himself. We have even known one hardy enough’ (Goldsmith had, as was pointed out in another part

of the notice, spoken in the *Enquiry* of the Marquis d'Argens as attempting to add the character of a philosopher to the vices of a debauchee) 'publicly to stigmatise men of the first rank in literature for their immoralities, while conscious himself of labouring under the infamy of having by the vilest and meanest actions forfeited all pretensions to honour and honesty. If such men as these, boasting a liberal education and pretending to genius, practise at the same time those arts which bring the sharper to the cart's-tail or the pillory, need our author wonder that *learning partakes the contempt of its professors.*'

The time will come when Mr. Griffiths, with accompaniment such as that of his ancient countryman's friend when the leek was offered, will publicly withdraw these vulgar falsehoods; and meanwhile they are not deserving of remark. Indeed, the quarrel, or interchange of foul reproach, as between author and bookseller, may claim at all times the least possible part of attention. It is a third more serious influence to which appeal is made, and on whose right interference the righteous arrangement will at last depend. But at the close of the second epoch, so brief yet so sorrowful, in the life of this great and genuine man-of-letters, it becomes us at least to understand the appeal he would have entered against the existing controul and government of the destinies of Literature. It was manifestly premature, and some passages of his after life will seem to avow as much: but it had too sharp an

experience in it not to have also much truth, and it would better have become certain bystanders in that age to have gone in and parted the combatants, than, as they did, make a ring around them for enjoyment of the sport, or in philosophic weariness abandon the scene altogether.

‘You know,’ said Walpole to one of his correspondents, ‘how I shun authors, and would never have been one myself, if it obliged me to keep such bad company. They are always in earnest, and think their profession serious, and dwell upon trifles, and reverence learning. I laugh at all these things, and divert myself.’ ‘It is probable,’ said David Hume, ‘that Paris will be long my home. I feel little inclination to the factious barbarians of London. Learning and the learned are on a very different footing here, from what they are among the factious barbarians.’

Matter of diversion for one, of disgust and avoidance for others, the factious barbarian struggle was left to a man more single-hearted: who thought the business of life a thing *to be* serious about, and who, unlike the Humes and Walpoles, was solely dependant for his bread on the very booksellers, of the danger of whose absolute power he desired to give timely warning. This he might do, as it seems to me, without personal injustice, and without pettish spite to the honest craft of bookselling, or to any other respectable trade. He might believe that those trade-indentures would turn out ill for literature; that in enlarging its channels by vulgar means, might be mischief rather than good;

that facilities for appeal to a wide circle of uninformed readers, were but facilities for employment to a circle of writers nearly as wide and quite as uninformed; that, in raising up a brood of writers whom any other earthly employment had better fitted, lay the danger of bringing down the man of genius to their level; and, in short, that Literature, properly understood and rightly cherished, had altogether a higher duty and significance than the profit or the loss of a tradesman's counter. In this I hold him to have taken fair ground. The reputations we have lived to see raised on these false foundations, the good clerks and accountants whom magazines have turned into bad literary men, the readers whose tastes have been pandered to and yet further lowered, the writers whose better talents have been disregarded and wasted, the venal puffery and pretence which have more depressed the modern man-of-letters than ever shameless flattery and beggary reduced his predecessors; are good evidence on that point.

But when Goldsmith wrote, there was still a certain recognised work for the bookseller to do. With the after-course of this narrative it will more fully appear, even in that modified assent and adhesion of Goldsmith himself which he certainly did not directly contemplate, perhaps wholly overlooked, when the *Enquiry* was planned, and a protest against booksellers entered into it. To complete that protest now (a most essential part of this chapter in his fortunes), I will add proof, from other parts of the



*Enquiry*, of the manly tendency, and freedom from personal spleen, apparent in the structure of the appeal which was built upon it.

“No nation gives greater encouragements to learning than we do; yet none are so injudicious in the application . . . All our magnificent endowments of colleges are erroneous; and at best, more frequently enrich the prudent than reward the ingenious . . . Every encouragement given to stupidity, when known to be such, is a negative insult to genius. This appears in nothing more evident than the undistinguished success of those who solicit subscriptions. We see the latter made a resource of indigence, and requested, not as rewards of merit, but as a relief of distress. If tradesmen happen to want skill in conducting their own business, yet they are able to write a book: if mechanics want money, or ladies shame, they write books and solicit subscriptions. Scarcely a morning passes, that proposals of this nature are not thrust into the half opening doors of the rich; with perhaps a paltry petition, showing the author's wants but not his merits. . . . What then are the proper encouragements of genius? I answer, subsistence and respect.”

This is not the language of one who would have had Literature again subsist, as of old, on servile adulation and vulgar charity. Goldsmith, indeed, seems rather to have thought with an earnest man of genius in our own day, that grants of money are by no means the chief things wanted for proper organisation of the literary class. ‘To give our men of letters,’ says Mr. Carlyle, ‘stipends, endowments, and all furtherance of cash, will do little toward the business. On the whole, one is

'weary of hearing about the omnipotence of money. I will say rather, that, for a genuine man, it is no evil to be poor. Money, in truth, can do much, but it cannot do all. We must know the province of it, and confine it there; and even spurn it back, when it wishes to get farther.' One of the lively illustrations of the *Enquiry* is not very opposite to this. 'The benefited divine,' says Goldsmith, 'whose wants are only imaginary, expostulates as bitterly as the poorest author that ever snuffed his candle with finger and thumb. Should interest or good fortune advance the divine to a bishopric, or the poor son of Parnassus into that place which the other has resigned, both are authors no longer. The one goes to prayers once a day, kneels upon cushions of velvet, and thanks gracious heaven for having made the circumstances of all mankind so extremely happy; the other batters on all the delicacies of life, enjoys his wife and his easy chair, and sometimes, for the sake of conversation, deploras the luxury of these degenerate days. All encouragements to merit are misapplied, which make the author too rich to continue his profession.'

But he would not therefore starve him, or to the mercies of blind chance altogether surrender him. He recalls a time he would wish to see revived; when, with little of wealth or worldly luxury, the writer could yet command esteem for himself and reverence for the claims of his calling; and he dwells upon the contrast of existing times, in language which will hereafter connect

itself with the deliberate dislike of Walpole, and the uneasy jealousy of Garrick.

“This link,” he exclaims, “now seems entirely broken. Since the days of a certain prime-minister of inglorious memory, the learned have been kept pretty much at a distance. A jockey, or a laced player, supplies the place of the scholar, the poet, or the man of virtue. . . Wit, when thus neglected by the great, is generally despised by the vulgar. Those who are unacquainted with the world are apt to fancy the man of wit as leading a very agreeable life. They conclude, perhaps, that he is attended to with silent admiration, and dictates to the rest of mankind with all the eloquence of conscious superiority. Very different is his present situation. He is called an author, and all know that an author is a thing only to be laughed at. His person, not his jest, becomes the mirth of the company. At his approach, the most fat unthinking face brightens into malicious meaning. Even aldermen laugh, and avenge on him the ridicule which was lavished on their forefathers.”

*Etiam victis redit in præcordia virtus  
Victoresque cadunt.*

The poet's poverty, continued Goldsmith, “is a standing topic of contempt. His writing for bread is an unpardonable offence. Perhaps of all mankind an author in these times is used most hardly. We keep him poor, and yet revile his poverty. Like angry parents, who correct their children till they cry and then correct them for crying, we reproach him for living by his wit, and yet allow him no other means to live. His taking refuge in garrets and cellars has of late been violently objected to him, and that by men who, I dare hope, are more apt to pity than insult his distress. Is poverty the writer's fault? No doubt he knows how to prefer a bottle of champagne to the nectar of the neighbouring alehouse, or a venison pasty

to a plate of potatoes. Want of delicacy is not in him, but in those who deny him the opportunity of making an elegant choice. Wit certainly is the property of those who have it, nor should we be displeas'd if it is the only property a man sometimes has. We must not underrate him who uses it for subsistence, and flies from the ingratitude of the age *even to a bookseller* for redress. If the profession of an author is to be laugh'd at by the stupid, it is certainly better to be contemptibly rich than contemptibly poor. For all the wit that ever adorned the human mind, will, at present, no more shield the author's poverty from ridicule, than his high-topped gloves conceal the unavoidable omissions of his laundress. To be more serious, new fashions, follies, and vices, make new monitors necessary in every age. An author may be considered as a merciful substitute to the legislature. He acts not by punishing crimes, but by preventing them. However virtuous the present age, there may be still growing employment for ridicule or reproof, for persuasion or satire. If the author be therefore still necessary among us, let us treat him with proper consideration as a child of the public, not a rent-charge on the community. And indeed a child of the public he is in all respects; for while so well able to direct others, how incapable is he frequently found of guiding himself! His simplicity exposes him to all the insidious approaches of cunning; his sensibility, to the slightest invasions of contempt. Though possessed of fortitude to stand unmoved the expected bursts of an earthquake, yet of feelings so exquisitely poignant as to agonise under the slightest disappointment. Broken rest, tasteless meals, and causeless anxieties, shorten his life, or render it unfit for active employment; prolonged vigils and intense application still farther contract his span, and make his time glide insensibly away. Let us not, then, aggravate those natural inconveniences by neglect: we have had sufficient instances of this kind already. Sale and Moore will suffice for one age at least. But they are dead, and their

sorrows are over. The neglected author of the *Persian Eclogues* which, however inaccurate, excel any in our language, is still alive : happy, if insensible of our neglect, not raging at our ingratitude ! It is enough that the age has already produced instances of men pressing foremost in the lists of fame, and worthy of better times ; schooled by continued adversity into a hatred of their kind ; flying from thought to drunkenness ; yielding to the united pressure of labour, penury, and sorrow ; sinking unheeded, without one friend to drop a tear on their unattended obsequies ; and indebted to Charity for a grave."

These words had been written but a very few years, when the hand that traced them was itself cold ; and, yielding to that united pressure of labour, penury, and sorrow, with a frame exhausted by unremitting and ill-rewarded drudgery, Goldsmith was indebted to the forbearance of creditors for a peaceful burial. It is not, then, in the early death of learned Sale, driven mad with those fruitless schemes of a Society for Encouragement of Learning, which he carried, it may be hoped, to a kinder world than this ; it is not from the grave of Edward Moore, with melancholy playfulness anticipating, in his last unsuccessful project, the very day on which his death would fall ; it is not even at the shrieks of poor distracted Collins, heard through the melancholy cathedral cloister where he played in childhood : but it is in this *Life, Adventures, and Death of Oliver Goldsmith*, that the mournful and instructive moral speaks its warning to us now.

I know of none more deeply impressive, or of wider

import and significance. When Collins saw the hopes of his youth in the cold light of the world's indifference, with a mixed impulse of despair and revenge he collected the unsold edition of his hapless *Odes and Eclogues*, and with a savage delight beheld them slowly consume, as, in his own room, he made a bonfire of them. When Goldsmith was visited with a like weakness, something of a like result foreboded; but the better part was forced upon him in his own despite, and in the present most affecting picture of his patience the hectic agony of Collins is but an idle frenzy. Steadily gazing on the evil destinies of men-of-letters, he no longer desires to avoid his own; conscious of the power of the booksellers, he condemns and denounces it; without direct hope, save of some small public favour, he protests against cruelties for which the public are responsible. The protest will accompany us through the remainder of his life: and be remembered as well in its lightest passages, as in those where any greatness of suffering will now be less apparent than a calmness of endurance; a resolute quiet temper, in which he will front and foil Adversity.

Such, at the worst, is the resource of a healthy genius. It works evil into good, and has within it a principle of sustainment and of self-consolation. The more particularly does it become the world to take note of this, as a party far more deeply concerned than bookseller or than author. That cry of Goldsmith is little for himself. Who wins his passage to the goal, may little care at the close for a larger

suffering or a less : the cry is raised for others, meanwhile perishing by the way. When *Irene* failed, and Johnson was asked how he felt, he answered 'like the Monument;' but when he had arrived at comfort and independence, and carelessly taking up one day his own fine satire, opened it at the lines which paint the scholar's fate, and the obstructions, almost insurmountable, in his way to fortune and fame, he burst into a passion of tears. Not for what he had himself endured, whose labour was at last victoriously closed; but for all the disastrous chances that still awaited others. It is the world's concern. There is a subtle spirit of compensation at work, when men regard it least, which to the spiritual sense accommodates the vilest need, and lightens the weariest burden. Milton talked of the lasting fame and perpetuity of praise, which God and good men have consented should be the reward of those whose published labours have advanced the good of mankind; and it is a set-off, doubtless, in the large account. The 'two carriages' and the 'style' of Griffiths are long passed away into the rubbish they sprang from, and all of us will be apt enough now to thank heaven that we were not Griffiths. Jacob Tonson's hundred thousand pounds are now of less account, than the bad shillings he insinuated into Dryden's payments; and the fame of Mr. Secretary Nottingham is very much overtopped by the pillory of De Foe. The Italian princes who beggared Dante are still without pity writhing in his deathless poem, while Europe looks to the beggar as to a star in heaven; nor

has Italy's greater day, or the magnificence which crowded the Court of Augustus, left behind them a name of any earthly interest, to compare with his who restored land to Virgil, and who succoured the fugitive Horace. These are results which have obtained in all countries, and been confessed by every age; and it will be well when they win for Literature other living regards, and higher present consideration, than it has yet been able to obtain. Men of genius can more easily starve, than the world, with safety to itself, can continue to neglect and starve them. What new arrangement, what kind of consideration may be required, will not be very distant from the simple acknowledgment that greater honour and respect ARE due.

This is what Literature has wanted in England, and not the laced coat and powdered wig which have on rare occasions been substituted for it. The most liberal patronage vouchsafed in this country to living men-of-letters, has never been unaccompanied by degrading incidents; nor their claims at any time admitted without discourtesy or contumely. It is a century and a half since an Act of Parliament was passed to 'protect' them, under cover of which their most valuable private rights were confiscated to the public use; and it is not fourteen years since another act was passed with a sort of kindly consideration on their behalf, by favour of which the poet and the teacher of writing, the historian and the teacher of dancing, the philosopher and the royal coachman, Sir Christopher Wren's great grand-daughter and the descendant of Charles the



Second's French riding-master, are permitted to appear in the same annual charitable list. But though statesmen have yet to learn what the State loses by such unwise scorn of what enlightens and refines it, they cannot much longer remain ignorant to what extent they are themselves enslaved by the power they thus affect to despise, or of the special functions of government and statesmanship which it is gradually assuming to itself. Its progress has been uninterrupted since Johnson's and Goldsmith's time, and cannot for as many more years continue unacknowledged. Pitt sneered when the case of Burns was stated to him, and talked of Literature taking care of itself. It *can* do so, and in a different and larger sense from what the minister intended; but can Society take care of itself, is also a material question.

Toward its solution, one sentence of Goldsmith's protest is an offering from his sorrow in these times of Authorship by Compulsion, not less worthy than his more cheerful offerings in those days of Authorship by Choice, to which the reader is now invited. 'An author may be considered 'as a merciful substitute to the legislature. He acts not 'by punishing crimes, but by preventing them.'



**BOOK THE THIRD. .**





BOOK III.

Authorship by Choice.

THE Booksellers were never more active than at the close of 1759. If

1759 } Literature had anything to  
 70 } hope from such exertions, its  
 1767 } halcyon days were come. If

it could live on Magazines and Reviews; if strength, subsistence, and respect, lay in employment of the multitudinous force of Grub-street; if demand and supply were law sufficient for its higher interests;

Literature was prosperous at last, and might laugh at all Pope's prophecies. Every week had its spawn of periodical publications; feeble, but of desperate fecundity. *Babblers and Schemers; Friends and*



*Advisers; Auditors, Comptrollers, and Grumblers; Spend-thrifts and Bachelors; Free-Enquirers, Scrutators, and Investigators; Englishmen, Freeholders, and Moderators; Sylphs and Triflers; Rangers and Cottagers; Templars, Gentlemen, and Skeptics;* in constant succession rose and fell. 'Sons of a day, just buoyant on the flood,' next day might see them 'numbered with the puppies in the mud': but the parents of the dull blind offspring had meanwhile eat and drank, and the owners or masters profited. Of Magazines alone, weekly and monthly, I will enumerate the specimens which a very few weeks, between the close of 1759 and the beginning of 1760, added to a multitude already wearing out their brief existence. They were: the *Royal Magazine, or Gentleman's Monthly Companion*; the *Impartial Review, or Literary Journal*; the *Weekly Magazine, or Gentlemen and Ladies' Polite Companion*; the *Ladies' Magazine*; the *Public Magazine*; the *Imperial Magazine*; the *Royal Female Magazine*; the *Universal Review*; the *Lady's Museum*; the *Musical Magazine*; and the *British Magazine, or Monthly Repository for Gentlemen and Ladies*.

See all her progeny, illustrious sight!  
Behold, and count them, as they rise to light!  
As Berecynthia, while her offspring vie  
In homage to the mother of the sky,  
Surveys around her, in the blest abode,  
A hundred sons, and ev'ry son a God:  
Not less with glory mighty Dullness crown'd,  
Now took thro' Grub-street her triumphant round,  
And her Parnassus glancing o'er at once,  
Beheld a hundred sons and each a Dunce.

Whether with equal triumph she beheld the new recruit advance to take his place, may admit of question. But her favourite Purdons, Hills, Willingtons, Kenricks, Kellys, Shiels, Smarts, Bakers, Guthries, Wotys, Ryders, Collyers, Joneses, Francklins, Pilkingtons, Huddleston Wynnes, and Hiffernans, were always at hand to comfort her: and there was an ill-fashioned, out-of-the-way corner, in even her domain, for temporary reception of the Smolletts and the Johnsons; men who owed her no allegiance, but had not yet deserted Grub-street altogether. 'It is a street in London,' was Johnson's definition, four years before the present, 'much inhabited ' by writers of small histories, dictionaries, and temporary ' poems: whence any mean production is called Grub-street.' Why, a man might enter even Grub-street, then, with bold and cheerful heart, seeing the author of the *English Dictionary* there. For there, as occasion called, he was still to be seen: poor, persevering, proud; 'unplac'd, unpension'd, no man's heir or slave': inviting the world to take heed that indeed he *was* there, 'tugging ' at the oar.'

With that great, independent soul of his, Samuel Johnson had no reproach for Fortune: she might come to him now, or stay away for ever. What other kind of man he might have been, if something more than fourpence halfpenny a day had welcomed him in the outset; or if houseless and homeless street-wanderings with Savage, and resolutions to stand by his country, had been fore-

stalled by house and home, and resolution of his country to stand by him; is not in his case a matter of much importance. He dealt with Life as he found it. 'Toil, 'envy, want, the patron, and the jail,' he grappled with as they came. Literature he took upon its own terms. Repulsed from the West-end mansion, he quietly turned to the counters of the East; insulted by bookseller Osborne, he knocked him down with one of his own folios; decently paid by bookseller Millar, he told the world to honour him for raising the rewards of books: and treating Authorship, since the world would have it so, as any other trade, and still heartily embracing Poverty as a trusted and honest companion, was content in Grub-street, or any other street, to work out his case as he could. 'Seven years, my lord, have now past,' he wrote to Lord Chesterfield, on appearance of the *Dictionary* four years before, 'since I waited in your outward rooms, or was 'repulsed from your door; during which time I have been 'pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is 'useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the 'verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one 'word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. . . . Is 'not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on 'a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has 'reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice 'which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had 'it been early, had been kind: but it has been delayed 'till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am

‘solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received; or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.’

And from this man, even now, there was nothing to separate the humblest of literary workmen. Here were his words, as a trumpet, to call them to the field; and there he was, in person, to animate the struggle. To what, then, should he first look, who, hitherto a compelled and reluctant dweller on the threshold of literature, was now of his own resolute choice advancing within to try his fortune, if not to this great, unyielding figure of Samuel Johnson, for courage and sustainment? There, beyond a doubt, were the thoughts of Oliver Goldsmith now. With poverty, not simply endured, but made a badge of honour; with independence, though but a bookseller’s servant; without remonstrance or uneasy resistance, should even the worst attendants of the garret continue to be his lot for ever. ‘He assured me,’ says the author of the *Rambler* of his friend Ofellus, ‘that thirty pounds a year was enough to enable a man to live in London without being contemptible. He allowed ten pounds for clothes and linen. He said a man might live in a garret at eighteenpence a week; few people would inquire where he lodged; and if they did, it was easy to say, *Sir, I am to be found at*



' *such a place*. By spending threepence in a coffee-house, he might be for some hours every day in very good company; he might dine for sixpence, breakfast on bread and milk for a penny, and do without supper. On *clean-shirt day*, he could go abroad and pay visits.' Nor were these the holiday theories of one to whom the practice of poverty was not still familiar. Here lay the singular worth of Johnson's example: that the world of enemies as well as friends were beginning, in a poor man, to recognise an intellectual chief and potentate of literature, a man who had the right to rule them. 'He and I were never cater-cousins,' wrote Smollett to Wilkes a month or two before the date to which I have brought this narrative; and in that letter, Smollett calls him the 'GREAT CHAM of literature.' Yet the Great Cham's poverty was obliged in this very year to surrender Gough-square for Gray's Inn: Gough-square in Fleet-street, where Doctor Burney had found him amid a chaës of Greek folios, and with the moderate accommodation of one deal writing-desk and a chair and a half; the entire seat offered to his visiter, and himself tottering on its three-legg'd and one-arm'd fellow. Nay, some few brief years before, he had been placed under arrest for five pounds eighteen shillings; though he had written *London*, the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, and the *Rambler*, and was author of *The English Dictionary*.

Now, week by week, in a paper of Mr. John Newbery's, he sent forth the *Idler*. What he was, and what with a

serious earnestness, be it wrong or right, he had come into the world to say and do, were at last becoming evident to all. Colleges were glad to have him visit them, and a small enthusiastic circle was gradually forming around him. The Reynoldses, Bennet Langtons, and Topham Beauclercs had already given in their allegiance; and Arthur Murphy was full of wonder at his submitting to contradiction, when they dined together this last Christmas day with young Mr. Burke of Wimpole-street. But not more known or conspicuous was the consideration thus exacted, than the poverty which still waited on it, and claimed its share. So might Literature avenge herself in this penniless champion, for the disgrace of the money-bags of Walpole and Pelham. 'I have several times called on Johnson,' wrote Grainger to Percy, some months before the present date, 'to pay him part of your subscription for his Shakspeare. I say part, because he never thinks of working if he has a couple of guineas in his pocket: I shall feed him occasionally with guineas.' It was thus the good Mr. Newbery found it best to feed him too; and in that worthy publisher's papers many memoranda of the present year were found, in record of *Lent Mr. Johnson one pound one*. For in his worst distress, it was still but of Literature Mr. Johnson begged or borrowed: to her he was indebted for his poverty, and to her only would he owe his independence. When his mother was dying, he did not ask his friend Mr. Reynolds, the fashionable painter in receipt of thousands, for the six guineas he sent

to comfort her death-bed : it was the advance of a printer. When, in the present year, she died, he paid the expenses of her funeral with the manuscript of *Rasselas*.

So schooled to regard the struggle of Life and Literature as one, and in midst of all apparent disadvantage to venerate its worth and sacredness, the author of the *Enquiry into the State of Polite Learning* stepped cheerfully forward into the market of books, and offered his wares for sale. Bookseller Wilkie, of the Bible in St. Paul's Church-yard, a spirited man in his way, and one of the foremost of magazine speculators, proposed a weekly publication of original essays, something in the *Rambler* form, but once instead of twice a week, and with greater variety of matter. Goldsmith assented; and on Saturday the 6th of October, 1759, there appeared, price threepence, to be continued every Saturday, *The Bee*.

Floriferis ut apes saltibus omnia libant  
Omnia nos itidem

was its motto ; learned, yet of pleasant promise ; taken from Lucretius. It was printed 'neatly,' as the advertisement in the *London Chronicle* of the 29th September had promised that it should be ; 'in crown octavo, and on good paper, 'containing two sheets or thirty-two pages, stitched in 'blue covers.' In other respects also it kept the bookseller's advertised promise ; 'consisting of a variety of essays 'on the amusements, follies, and vices in fashion, particularly the most recent topics of conversation, remarks 'on theatrical exhibitions, memoirs of modern literature,

'&c., &c.' And on the back of the blue cover, Mr. Wilkie begged leave to inform the public 'that every twelve numbers would make a handsome pocket volume, at the end of which should be given an emblematical frontispiece, title, and table of contents.' So there was reasonable hope at starting; and no doubt a long line of volumes already jostled each other, in Goldsmith's lively brain.

The first number, it must be said, was of good promise. One finds a lack of its wisdom and its lightness in books 'stitched in blue covers' now. The introduction disclaimed relationship to the magazine trade and family; refused to tempt its readers with 'three beautiful prints, 'curiously coloured from nature,' or to take any kind of merit from 'its bulk or its frontispiece;' and invoked for itself, with mixed mirth and earnestness, a class of readers that should know the distinction between a *bon-mot* for White's, and a jest for the Cat and Bagpipes in St. Giles's. There was a letter on the Poles; a notice of the death of Voltaire's victim, Maupertuis; and, under the title of Alcander and Septimius, a popular version of that beautiful tale of Boccacio, which afterwards suggested to a writer who belonged to Goldsmith's country, took early inspiration from his genius, and bore up uncrushed against as desperate poverty by the force of his example, the manly and earnest tragedy of *Gisippus*. Nor, since the delightful gossip of Cibber had raised the curtain on the Monforts, Nokeses, and Bettertons of a past age, had any such

just or lively writing on the theatres been given to the world, as the playhouse criticism of the *Bee*.

The first of his papers on this subject pointed out the superiority of French comic acting over English, and its causes; and had some happy illustrations from his own experience. His later remarks, on the want of general stage discipline in England ('dirty-shirted guards 'rolling their eyes round upon the audience, instead of 'keeping them fixed upon the actors';) on skilful management of gesture (in which he excepts Garrick and Mrs. Clive from his censure, placing them on a level with the French); and in 'explanation' of the ill success of the English operatic stage, where he touches the springs that operate to this hour; still further demonstrate how competent he was to this department of criticism.

But, like Hume's *Epigoniad* effort, all this was uphill work: his first *Bee* had an idle time of it, and greater favour was asked for the second in a paid-for newspaper paragraph of particular earnestness. 'The public,' said this advertisement, which had a pathetic turn in it, 'is requested to compare this, with other periodical performances which more pompously solicit their attention. If upon perusal it be found deficient either in humour, elegance, or variety, the author will readily acquiesce in their censure. It is possible the reader may sometimes draw a prize, and even should it turn up a blank it costs him but threepence.' In number the second, for that small sum, was a most agreeable little lesson On Dress, against

fault finders and dealers in ridicule, proving by example of cousin Hannah that such folks are themselves the most ridiculous; and a much sounder notion of a patriot king than Bolingbroke's, in homely sketches of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, in remark on the difficulties of so educating princes that 'the superior dignity of man to that of royalty' should be their leading lesson, and in warning against the folly of entrusting a charge so sacred to men 'who themselves have acted in a sphere too high to know mankind.' A delightful essay in the same number, with Cardinal de Retz and Dick Wildgoose side by side, to prove that pleasure is in ourselves, not in the objects offered for our amusement, and that philosophy should force the trade of happiness when nature has denied the means, also well deserves mention.

The third number opened with a paper on the Use of Language: to which the grave philologist resorting, found language he was little used to. It was a plea for the poor: an essay to prove that he who best knew how to conceal his necessities and desires, was the most likely person to find redress, and that the true use of speech was not to express wants but conceal them. All of us have known the Jack Spindle of this exquisite sketch; some perhaps relieved him; and many have undergone the truth of his life's philosophy, that to have much, or to seem to have it, is the only way to have more, since it is the man who has no occasion to borrow, that alone finds numbers willing to lend. 'You then, O ye beggars of

‘ my acquaintance,’ exclaimed Goldsmith, ‘ whether in rags or lace, whether in Kent-street or the Mall, whether at Smyrna or St. Giles’s, might I advise you as a friend, never seem in want of the favour you solicit. Apply to every passion but pity for redress. You may find relief from vanity, from self-interest, or from avarice, but seldom from compassion.’ Following this were three well-written characters. Of Father Feyjoo, whose popular essays against degrading superstitions have since procured him the title of the Spanish Addison ; of Alexandrian Hypatia, afterwards immortalized by Gibbon ; and of Lysippus, an imaginary representative of some peculiarities in the essayist himself, and timely assertor of the ordinary virtues as opposed to what are commonly mistaken for the great ones.

Still the churlish public would not buy the *Bee* ; and the fourth number’s opening article was a good-humoured comment on that fact. Not a newspaper or magazine, he said, that had not left him far behind ; they had got to Islington at least, while the sound of Bow bell still stayed in his ears ; nevertheless, ‘ if it were only to spite all Grub-street,’ he was resolved to write on ; and he made light-hearted announcement to the world of what he had written to Bryanton. ‘ If the present generation will not hear my voice, hearken, O Posterity ! to you I call, and from you I expect redress ! What rapture will it not give, to have the Scaligers, Daciers, and Warburtons of future times commenting with admiration upon every line I

' now write, and working away those ignorant creatures  
' who offer to arraign my merit, with all the virulence  
' of learned reproach. Ay, my friends, let them feel it ;  
' call names ; never spare them ; they deserve it all, and  
' ten times more.' In a like playful tone are his closing  
threats, that, if not better supported he must throw off  
all connection with taste, and fairly address his coun-  
trymen in the engaging style and manner of other  
periodical pamphlets. He will change his title into the  
*Royal Bee*, he says, the *Anti-gallican Bee*, or the *Bee's  
Magazine*. He will lay in a proper stock of popular  
topics ; such as encomiums on the King of Prussia, invectives  
against the Queen of Hungary and the French, the  
necessity of a militia, our undoubted sovereignty of the  
seas, reflections upon the present state of affairs, a disserta-  
tion upon liberty, some seasonable thoughts upon the  
intended bridge of Blackfriars, and an address to Britons ;  
the history of an old woman whose tooth grew three  
inches long, shall not be omitted ; nor an ode upon ' our  
' victories ;' nor a rebus ; nor an acrostic upon Miss Peggy  
P— ; nor a journal of the weather : and he will wind up  
the whole, so that the public shall have no choice but to  
purchase, with four extraordinary pages of letterpress, a  
beautiful map of England, and two prints curiously  
coloured from nature. Such was the booksellers' literature  
of the day : the profitable contribution of Paternoster-  
row and Grub-street, to the world's intellectual cultivation.

While he satirized it thus good-naturedly, Goldsmith



took care to append graver remarks on the more serious matter it involved, and which with his own experience lay so near his heart. But in no querulous spirit. He is now content to have found out the reason why mediocrity should have its rewards at once, and excellence be paid in reversion. There is in these earliest essays something more pleasing than even their undoubted elegance and humour, in that condition of mind. If neglects and injuries are still to be his portion, you do not now despair that he will turn them to commodities. It is not by his cries and complainings you shall hereafter trace him to his neglected, ill-furnished, wretched home. As he watches its naked cobwebbed walls, he finds matter for amusement to the readers of the *Bee*, in watching the spiders that have refuge there; and in his fourth number puts forth an instructive paper on the habits and predatory life of that most wary, ingenious, hungry, and persevering insect.



He was not to be daunted, now. Looking closely into his life, one finds that other works beside this of the *Bee* were eking out its scanty supplies. He was writing for the *Busy Body*, published thrice a week for twopence, by worthy Mr. Pottinger, and brought out but three days

after the *Bee*. He was writing for the *Lady's Magazine*, started not many days later, by persevering Mr. Wilkie, in the hope of propping up the *Bee*. He had taken his place, and would go to his journey's end. Since the Pleasure stage coach had not opened its door to him, he had mounted the waggon of Industry; not yet despairing, it might be, to be overtaken again by his old Vanity Whim; and, with such help, even hopeful to come up with the landau of Riches, and find lodgment at last in the Fame Machine. We note this pleasant current of his thoughts in the *Bee's* fifth number. There, in that last conveyance he places Addison, Steele, Swift, Pope, and Congreve; and, vainly stretching out a number of his own little blue-backed book to entice the goodly company, resolves to be useful since he may not be ambitious, and to earn by assiduity what merit does not open to him. But not the less cheerfully does he concede to others, what for himself he may not yet command. He shuts Fame's door, indeed, on Arthur Murphy, but opens it to Hume and to Johnson: he closes it against Smollett's *History*, but opens it to his *Peregrine Pickle* and his *Roderick Random*. And with this paper, I doubt not, began his first fellowship of letters in a higher than the Grub-street region. Shortly after this, I trace Smollett to his door; and, for what he had said of the author of the *Rambler*, Johnson soon grasped his hand. 'This was a very grave personage, whom at some distance I took for one of the most reserved and even disagreeable figures I had seen;

‘but as he approached, his appearance improved; and when I could distinguish him thoroughly, I perceived that in spite of the severity of his brow, he had one of the most goodnatureed countenances that could be imagined.’ In that sentence lay the germ of one of the pleasantest of literary friendships.

The poor essayist’s habits, however, know little change as yet. His single chair and his window-bench have but to accommodate Mr. Wilkie’s devil, waiting for proofs; or Mr. Wilkie himself, resolute for arrears of copy. The landlady of Green Arbour Court remembered one festivity there, which seems to have been highly characteristic. A ‘gentleman’ called on a certain evening, and asking to see her lodger, went unannounced up stairs. She then heard Goldsmith’s room door pushed open, closed again sharply from within, and the key turned in the lock; after this, the sound of a somewhat noisy altercation reached her; but it soon subsided; and to her surprise, not unmingled with alarm, the perfect silence that followed continued for more than three hours. It was a great relief to her, she said, when the door was again opened, and the ‘gentleman,’ descending more cheerfully than he had entered, sent her out to a neighbouring tavern for some supper. Mr. Wilkie or Mr. Pottinger had obtained his arrears, and could afford a little comforting reward to the starving author.

Perhaps he carried off with him that mirthful paper on the Clubs of London, to which a pleasant imagination most

loved to pay festive visits on solitary and supperless days. Perhaps that paper on Public Rejoicings for Victory which described the writer's lonely wanderings a few nights before, from Ludgate Hill to Charing Cross, through crowded and illuminated streets, past Punch houses and Coffee houses, and where excited shoe-makers, thinking wood to be nothing like leather, were asking with frightful oaths what ever would become of religion if the wooden-soled French papishes came over! Perhaps that more affecting lonely journey through the London streets, which the *Bee* soon after published with the title of the City Night Piece, in which there was so much of the past struggle and the lesson it had left, so much of the grief-taught sympathy, so much of the secret of the genius, of tolerant, gentle-hearted Goldsmith. What he was to the end of his London life, when miserable outcasts had cause with the great and learned to lament him, this paper shews him to have been at its beginning. The kind-hearted man would wander through the streets at night, to console and reassure the misery he could not otherwise give help to. While he thought of the rich and happy who were at rest; while he looked even up to the wretched roof that gave shelter to himself; he could not bear to think of those to whom the streets were the only home. 'Strangers, wanderers, and orphans,' too destitute for redress, too wretched for pity. 'Poor shivering girls' who had seen happier days, and been flattered into beauty and into sin. 'Poor houseless creatures,' to whom the world,

responsible for their guilt, gives reproaches but will not give relief. These were teachers in life's truths, who



spoke with a sterner and wiser voice than that of mere personal sorrow. 'The slightest misfortunes of the great, the most imaginary uneasiness of the rich, are aggravated with all the power of eloquence to engage attention; the poor weep unheeded, persecuted by every subordinate species of tyranny, and every law which gives others security becomes an enemy to them.' In thoughts like these, and in confirmed resolution to make the poor his clients and write down those tyrannies of law, the night

wanderings of the thoughtful writer not unprofitably ended.

It was a resolution very manifest in his next literary labour. On the 29th of November, the *Bee's* brief life closed, with its eighth number; and in the following month its editor was sought out both by Doctor Smollett and by Mr. John Newbery of St. Paul's Churchyard. But as he had meanwhile made earnest application to Mr. David Garrick for his interest in an election at the Society of Arts, it will be best to describe at once the circumstances involved in that application, and its result on the poor author's subsequent intercourse with the rich manager and proprietor of Drury Lane.

Goldsmith was passionately fond of the Theatre. In prosperous days, it will ring with his humour and cheerfulness; in these struggling times, it was the help and refuge of his loneliness. We have seen him steal out of his garret to hear Columba sing: and if she fell short of the good old music he had learnt to love at Lissoy, the other admiration he was taught there, of happy human faces, at the theatre was always in his reach. If there is truth in what was said by a wise writer, that being happy, and seeing others happy, for two hours, is a duration of bliss not at all to be slighted by so short-lived a creature as man, it is certain that he who despises the theatre adds short-sightedness to short life. If he is a rich man, he will be richer for hearing there of what account the poor may be; if he is a poor man, he will not be poorer

for the knowledge that those above him have their human sympathies. Sir Thomas Overbury held a somewhat strong opinion as to this: thinking the playhouse more necessary in a well-governed commonwealth than the school, because men were better taught by example than by precept: and it seems at any rate, however light the disregard it has fallen into now, of at least equal importance with many of the questions which in these days form and dissolve governments, whether a high and healthy entertainment, the nature of which, conservative of all kindly relations between man and man, is to encourage, refine, and diffuse humanity, might not claim, in some degree, the care and countenance of the State.

This grave remark occurs to me here, because grave disappointments in connection with it will occur hereafter; and already even Garrick's fame and strength had been shaken by his difficult relations with men of letters. 'I am as much an admirer of Mr. Garrick,' said Mr. Ralph, in his *Case of Authors by Profession*, published in 1758, 'and his excellences, as I ought to be; and I envy him ' no part of his good fortune. But then, though I am ' free to acknowledge he was made for the stage, I cannot ' be brought to think the stage was made only for him; ' or that the fate of every dramatic writer ought either ' to be at his mercy, or that of any other manager what- ' ever; and the single consideration that there is no alter- ' native but to fly from him, in case of any neglect or ' contempt, to Mr. Rich, is enough to deter any man in his

'senses from embarking a second time on such a hopeless voyage.' Manifestly, however, this was neither the fault of Rich nor of Garrick, but of the system which left both to shift as they could, and made self-protection the primary law. 'The manager,' he continues, admitting the whole question at issue in his complaints, 'whether player or harlequin, must be the sole pivot on which the whole machine is both to move and rest; there is no drawback on the profit of the night in old plays; and any access of reputation to a dead author, carries no impertinent claims and invidious distinctions along with it. When the playhouse is named,' he added bitterly, 'I make it a point to pull off my hat, and think myself obliged to the lowest implement belonging to it. I am ready to make my best acknowledgments to a harlequin, who has continence enough to look upon an author in the green-room, of what consideration soever, without laughing at him.' Other pamphlets followed in the cry; and poor Ned Purdon drew up a number of anonymous suggestions as to 'how Mr. Garrick ought to behave.'

It was employment of this tone which introduced needless elements of bitterness. The charge was a simple one, and might have been stated simply. No doubt Garrick, in common with every manager-actor before or since his time, was fairly exposed to it. I have turned to the playbills of the season directly preceding the appearance of Mr. Ralph's pamphlet, and find, amidst revivals of Fletcher's *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*, and Shirley's



comedy of *The Gamester*, and Shakspeare's *Tempest* as an opera and *Taming of a Shrew* as a farce, but one original production: *Lilliput*, played by children. It is not immaterial to the question, however, to recount the highest tragic claimants, thus affronted by Shakspeare, Fletcher, Shirley, and *Lilliput*. They were Whitehead, Crisp, Francis, Francklin, Glover, Brown, Mallet, Murphy, and Dodsley: for denying whose higher attractiveness to the Shakspeares and Fletchers, nay, for preferring even the comic to that tragic *Lilliput*, the public seems a better object of attack than the manager. When Walpole joined the cry, this had sarcastic admission. 'Garrick is treated in the town as it deserves,' he said, 'and likes to be treated: with scenes, fireworks, and his own writing. A good new play I never expect to see more; nor have seen since the *Provoked Husband*, which came out when I was at school.' Was it Garrick's crime, without good new plays, to make the venture of good old ones?

In truth, looking fairly at his theatrical management, with the light his published *Correspondence* has thrown upon it, it was a great improvement, in all generous and liberal points, on those which preceded it. Booth treated writers of Anne much more scurvily, than the writers of George the Second were treated by Garrick. 'Booth often declared,' says his biographer, 'in public company, that he and his partners lost money by new plays; and that, if he were not obliged to it, he would seldom give his consent to perform one of them.' Garrick transposed and

altered often ; but he never forced upon the unhappy author of a tragedy a change in the religion of his hero, nor told a dramatist of good esteem that he had better have turned to an honest and laborious calling, nor complacently prided himself on *choaking singing birds*, when his stern negative had silenced a young aspirant. Those were the achievements of manager Cibber. He was at all times fonder than needful of his own importance, it is true : but society has no right to consent to even the nominal depression in the so-called social scale, of a man whose calling exacts no common accomplishments, and then resent the self-exaggeration unwholesomely begotten on its own injustice. When Junius took offence at the player whom dukes and duchesses tolerated at their table, it was not a matter to waste wit upon, or sarcasm, or scathing eloquence : he simply told the *Vagabond* to stick to his pantomimes. Even men of education were known to have pursued Garrick, when on country visits to noblemen of his acquaintance, with dirty, clumsily-folded notes, passed amid the ill-concealed laughter of servants to the great man's guest, with the address of *Mr. David Garrick, Player*. It asked a strength which Garrick had not, to disregard this vulgar folly ; it wounded him where he was known to be weak ; it tempted him to those self-assertions which imply the failure of self-reliance ; it poisoned his entire and constant faith in all who were not solely governed by his will ; and it blinded him to the ridicule with which even dependents listened to his public distress

on the mornings of crowded rehearsals, that to decline some Ambassador's proffered courtesies made him wretched, but prior promises to Countess Dowagers must be kept.

A satisfaction of this kind was afforded to Mr. Ralph, when, in the season (57-58) of this the appearance of his pamphlet, the outraged manager, laughing heartily at all authors' complaints and attacks, and tearing up their rebellious pamphlets carelessly as he would the card of a lord, duke, judge, or bishop, to strike awe and admiration into bystanders, did yet, most laboriously and most clumsily, *bring out* Doctor Smollett, in a piece altogether unworthy of his genius. The concession was appropriately followed by production of the *Agis* of Mr. Home; not without reason 'cried over, for its exclusively modern Greek, by *Douglas-loving* Gray, and compared to 'an antique statue, 'painted white and red, frizzed and dressed in a negligée 'made by a Yorkshire mantua-maker.' Then, failure and laughter repaying this pains and warmth, the cold fit came violently back; and in the season of '58 and '9 the wrongs of Arthur Murphy and Dodsley, the bereaved *Cleone* and deserted *Orphan of China*, were the talk of the town. The topic seemed to force itself on one who was delivering in a protest against the wrongs of men of letters; and with the *Essay on Polite Learning* appeared these remarks, in a chapter devoted to the stage.

'Our poet's performance must undergo a process truly 'chemical, before it is presented to the public. It must be 'tried in the manager's fire, strained through a licenser,

'suffer from repeated corrections, till it may be a mere *caput mortuum* when it arrives before the public. It may be said that we have a sufficient number of plays upon our theatres already, and therefore there is no need of new ones. But are they sufficiently good? And is the credit of our age nothing? Must our present times pass away unnoticed by posterity? If these are matters of indifference, it then signifies nothing, whether we are to be entertained with the actor or the poet; with fine sentiments or painted canvas; or whether the dancer or the carpenter be constituted master of the ceremonies. How is it at present? Old pieces are revived, and scarcely any new ones admitted. The actor is ever in our eye, the poet seldom permitted to appear; and the stage, instead of serving the people, is made subservient to the interests of avarice. Getting a play on even in three or four years, is a privilege reserved only for the happy few who have the arts of courting the Manager as well as the Muse: who have adulation to please his vanity, powerful patrons to support their merit, or money to indemnify disappointment. Our Saxon ancestors had but one name for a wit and a witch. I will not dispute the propriety of uniting those characters then: but the man who, under the present discouragements, ventures to write for the stage, whatever claim he may have to the appellation of a wit, at least has no right to be called a conjuror.'

It is impossible to think Goldsmith wholly justified in this; but it is unquestionable that the feeling which

pervades the extract, as well as the pamphlet of Mr. Ralph, was now becoming general with the literary class, and tended greatly to embitter the successes of Garrick's later life. In connection with it, at the same time, a regret will always arise, remembering the differences of a Goldsmith and a Ralph, that the lively irritable actor should have been indiscriminate in the resentments it provoked, and unable, in any instance, to conceive a better actuating motive than the envy his prosperity had excited. Thomas Davies tells us, that when, somewhere about the time of his connection with the *Bee*, Goldsmith sought to obtain, what a struggling man of letters was thought to have some claim to, the vacant Secretaryship of the Society of Arts, Garrick made answer to a personal application for his vote, 'that Mr. Goldsmith having taken pains to 'deprive himself of his assistance by an unprovoked 'attack upon his management of the theatre in his *State of Learning*, it was impossible he could lay claim to any 'recommendation from himself.' Davies adds, that 'Goldsmith, instead of making an apology for his conduct, 'either from misinformation or misconception, bluntly 'replied, "In truth he had spoken his mind, and believed "what he said was very right." The manager dismissed 'him with civility.'

He might with wisdom have done more. The blunt reply, in a generous man's interpretation, should at least have blunted the fancied wrong. It is painful to think that neither of these famous men, whose cheerful gaieties of

heart were the natural bonds of a mutual sympathy and fast alliance, should throughout their lives have wholly lost the sense of this first unlucky meeting. As Goldsmith himself removed from the second edition of the *Polite Learning* much of the remark that had given Garrick most offence, and in the ordinary copies it is now no longer found, it may the more freely be admitted that the grounds of offence were not altogether imaginary. Indeed, besides what I have quoted, there were incidental expressions yet more likely to breed resentment in a sensitive, quick nature. 'I am not at present writing for a party,' said Goldsmith, 'but above theatrical connexions in every sense of the expression. I have no particular spleen against the fellow who sweeps the stage with the besom, or the hero who brushes it with his train. It were a matter of indifference to me, whether our heroines are in keeping, or our candle-snuffers burn their fingers, did not such make a great part of public care and polite conversation. Our actors assume all that state off the stage which they do on it; and, to use an expression borrowed from the green-room, every one is *up* in his part. I am sorry to say it, they seem to forget their real characters.' With sorrow is it also to be said, that here the writer was manifestly wrong. Mr. Ralph's 'implements' and 'harlequins' were not less tasteful and considerate, than this jeering tone.

There is no intellectual art so peculiarly circumstanced as that of the actor. If, in the hurried glare which sur-

rounds him, each vanity and foible that he has comes forth in strong relief, it is hard to grudge him the better incidents to that brilliant lot for which he pays so dearly. His triumphs had need be bright and dazzling, for their fires are spent as soon as kindled; his enjoyments intense, for of all mental influences they wither soonest. He may plant in infinite hearts the seeds of goodness, of ideal beauty, and of practical virtue; but with their fruits his name will not be remembered, or remembered only as a name. And surely, if he devotes a genius that might command success in any profession, to one whose rewards, if they come at all, must be immediate as the pleasure and instruction it diffuses, it is a short-sighted temper that would eclipse the pleasure and deny the rewards.

The point of view at this time taken by Goldsmith was, in fact, obscured by his own unlucky fortunes; but the injustice he shrunk from committing in the case of the prosperous painter, Mr. Reynolds, he should not thus carelessly have inflicted on the prosperous actor, Mr. Garrick. The one artist might have claimed to be a painter of portraits, as the other was. Uneasy relations, indeed, which only exist between author and actor, have had a manifest tendency at all times unfairly to disparage the actor's intellectual claims, and to set any of the inferior arts above them. Nevertheless, the odds might be made more even. The deepest and rarest beauties of poetry are those which the actor cannot grasp; but, in the actor's startling triumphs, whether of movement, gesture, look, or tone,

the author has no great share. Thus, were accounts fairly struck with the literary class, a Garrick might be honestly left between the gentle and grand superiority of a Shakspeare on the one hand, who, from the heights of his immeasurable genius, smiles down help and fellowship upon him; and the eternal petulance and pretensions of an Arthur Murphy on the other, who, from the round of a ladder to which of himself he never could have mounted, looks down with ludicrous contempt on what Mr. Ralph would call the 'implements' of his elevation.

But Doctor Smollett and Mr. Newbery have been waiting us all this while, and neither of them belonged to that leisurely class which can very well afford to wait. The Doctor was full of energy and movement always, as one of his own headlong heroes; and who remembers not the philanthropic bookseller in the *Vicar of Wakefield*; the good-natured man with the red-pimpled face, who had no sooner alighted but he was in haste to be gone, 'for he was ever on business of the utmost importance, and was at that time actually compiling materials for the 'history of Mr. Thomas Trip.' But not on Mr. Thomas Trip's affairs had the child-loving publisher now ventured up Breakneck Stairs; and upon other than the old *Critical* business was the author of *Peregrine Pickle* a visitor in Green Arbour Court. Both had new and important schemes in hand, and with both it was an object to secure the alliance and services of Goldsmith. Smollett had at all times not a little of the Pickle in him, and Newbery much



of the Mr. Trip; but there was a genial good-heartedness in both, which makes it natural and pleasant to have to single out these two men, as the first active friends and patrons of the author of the unsuccessful *Bee*. Their offers were of course accepted; and it seems to imply something, however slight, of a worldly advance in connection with them, that, in the month which followed, the luckless *Bee* was issued in an independent form by the Dodsleys, and Kenrick received instructions from Mr. Ralph Griffiths to treat it in the *Monthly Review* as the work of an ingenious person.

The 1st of January, 1760, saw the first venture launched. It was published for sixpence, 'embellished with curious copperplates,' and entitled '*The British Magazine, or Monthly Repository for Gentlemen and Ladies*. By T. Smollett, M.D., and others.' It was dedicated with much fervour to Mr. Pitt; and Mr. Pitt's interest (greatly to the spleen of Horace Walpole, who thinks the matter worthy of mention in his *Memoirs of George the Second*) enabled Smollett to put it forth with a royal license, granted in consideration of the fact that Doctor Smollett had 'represented to his Majesty that he 'has been at great labour and expense in writing original pieces himself, and engaging other gentlemen to write original pieces.' The Doctor, in truth, had but lately left the 'Bench,' at the close of that three months' imprisonment for libel into which his spirited avowal of the authorship of a criticism on Admiral Knowles had betrayed him; and the

king's patronage had probably been sought as a counterpoise to the king's prison. But the punishment had not been without its uses. In the nature of Smollett, to the last, there were not a few of the heedless impulses of boyhood; and from this three months' steady gaze on the sadder side of things, he seems to have turned with tempered and gentler thoughts. In the first number of the *British Magazine* was the opening of the tale which contained his most feminine heroine (Aurelia Darnel), and the most amiable and gentlemanly of his heroes (Sir Launcelot Greaves); for, though Sir Launcelot is mad, wise thoughts have made him so; and in the hope to 'remedy evils which 'the law cannot reach, to detect fraud and treason, to 'abase insolence, to mortify pride, to discourage slander, 'to disgrace immodesty, and to stigmatise ingratitude,' he stumbles through his odd adventures. There is a pleasure in connecting this alliance of Smollett and Goldsmith, with the first approach of our great humourist to that milder humanity and more genial wisdom which shed its mellow rays on Mathew Bramble.

Nor were the services engaged from Oliver unworthy of his friend's Sir Launcelot. Side by side with the kindly enthusiast, appeared some of the most agreeable of the *Essays* which were afterwards re-published with their writer's name; and many which were never connected with it, until half a century after the writer's death. Here Mr. Rigmarole fell into that Boar's Head Reverie in Eastcheap, since so many times dreamt over, and so full of kindly

rebuke to indiscriminating praisers of the past. Here the shabby man in St. James's Park (Goldsmith, like Justice Woodcock, loved a vagabond) recounted his strolling adventures with a vivacity undisturbed by poverty; and, with his Merry-Andrew, Bajazet, and Wildair, laughed at Garrick in his glory. Here journey was made to the Fountain in whose waters sense and genius mingled, and by whose side the traveller found Johnson and Gray (a pity it did not prove so!) giving and receiving fame. And here, above all, the poor, hearty, wooden-legged beggar, first charmed the world with a philosophy of content and cheerfulness which no misfortune could subdue. This was he who had lost his leg and the use of his hand, and was obliged to beg, but with these exceptions blessed his stars for knowing no reason to complain: some had lost both legs and an eye, but thank Heaven it was not so bad with him. This was he who remarked that people might say this and that of being in gaol, but when he was found guilty of being poor, and was sent to Newgate, he found it as agreeable a place as ever he was in, in all his life: who fought the French in six pitched battles, and verily believed, that, but for some good reason or other, his captain would have given him promotion and made him a corporal: who was beaten cruelly by a boatswain, but the boatswain did it without considering what he was about: who slept on a bed of boards in a French prison, but with a warm blanket about him, because, as he remarked, he always loved to lie well: and to whom, when he came to sum

up and balance his life's adventures, it occurred that had he had the good fortune to have lost his leg and the use of his hand on board a king's ship, and not a privateer, he should have had his sixpence a week for the rest of his days ; but that was not his chance ; one man was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and another with a wooden ladle : ' however, blessed be God, I enjoy good ' health.' This was as wise philosophy as *Candide's*, at which Europe was then laughing heartily ; and it is worth mention that from the countrymen of Voltaire this little essay should first have derived its fame. So popular in France was the ' humble optimist,' as his translator called him, that he is not unlikely to have visited even the halls of *Les Delices* ; to be read there, as everywhere, with mirth upon the face and tenderness at the heart ; perhaps to reawaken recollections of the ungainly, wandering scholar.

Of upwards of twenty essays thus contributed to Smollett's magazine, few were republished by Goldsmith ; but from other causes, certainly, than lack of merit. One was a criticism of two rival singers, two Polly Peachums then dividing Vauxhall, so pleasantly worded that neither could take offence ; but of temporary interest chiefly. Another was a caution against violent courtships, from a true story in the family of his uncle Contarine ; perhaps thought too private for reappearance in more permanent form. A third (not reproduced, it may be, lest the wooden-legged philosopher should lose in popularity by a companion less popular than himself) described, as a contrast to the

happiness of the maimed and luckless soldier, the miseries of a healthy half-pay officer of unexpected fortune, unable to bear the transition from moderate to extravagant means, and rendered so insensible by unused indulgences that he had come to see *Falstaff* without a smile and the *Orphan* without emotion. A fourth was a little history of seduction, hasty and abrupt ; but in which the hero bore such resemblance to the immortal family of the Primroses, as to have fitly merged and been forgotten in their later glory.

The last of these detached essays which I shall mention for the present, did not appear in the *British Magazine*, but much concerned it ; and though not reckoned worthy of preservation by its writer, is evidence not to be omitted of his hearty feeling to Smollett, and ready resource to serve a friend. It was in plain words a puff of the *British Magazine* and its projector ; and a puff of as witty pretension as ever visited the ingenious brain of the yet unborn friend of Mr. Dangle. It purported to describe a *Wow-wow* ; a kind of newspaper club of a country town, to which the writer amusingly described himself driven, by his unavailing efforts to find anybody anywhere else. All were at the *Wow-wow*, from the apothecary to the drawer of the tavern ; and there he found, inspired by pipes and newspapers, such a smoke and fire of political discussion, such a setting right of all the mistakes of the generals in the war, such a battle, conducted with chalk, upon the blunders of Finck and Daun, and such quidnunc explosions against the Dutch in Pondicherry, that infallibly the

Wow-wow must have come to a war of its own ' had not  
' an Oxford Scholar, led there by curiosity, pulled a new  
' magazine out of his pocket, in which he said there were  
' some pieces extremely curious and that deserved their  
' attention. He then read the *Adventures of Sir Launcelot*  
' *Greaves*, to the entire satisfaction of the audience, which  
' being finished, he threw the pamphlet upon the table :  
' "That piece, gentlemen," says he, "is written in the very  
' "spirit and manner of Cervantes ; there is great know-  
' "ledge of human nature, and evident marks of the master  
' "in almost every sentence; and from the plan, the humour,  
' "and the execution, I can venture to say that it dropped  
' "from the pen of the ingenious Doctor . . ." Every  
' one was pleased with the performance ; and I was par-  
' ticularly gratified in hearing all the sensible part of the  
' company give orders for the *British Magazine*.'

So said the not less anonymous or ingenious Doctor, in that venture of good Mr. Newbery's which started but twelve days after Smollett's, and in which also had been enlisted the services of the Green Arbour Court lodger. War is the time for newspapers ; and the inventive head which planned the *Universal Chronicle*, with the good taste that enlisted Johnson in its service, now made a bolder effort in the same direction. The first number of *The Public Ledger* was published on the 12th of January 1760. Nothing less than a Daily Newspaper had the busy publisher of children's books projected. But a daily newspaper was not an

appalling speculation, then. Not then, morning after morning, did it throw its eyes of Argus over all the world. No universal command was needed for it then, over sources of foreign intelligence that might controul and govern the money transactions of rival hemispheres. There existed with it, then, no costly arts for making and marring fortunes; cultivated to a perfection high as the pigeon's flight, swift as the courier's horse, or deep as the secret drawer of the diplomatist's bureau. Then, it was no more essential to a paper's existence, that countless advertisements should be scattered broadcast through its columns; than to a city's business, that puffing vans should perambulate its highways, and armies of placard-bearing paupers seize upon its pavements. Neither as a perfect spy of the time, nor as a full informer or high improver of the time, did a daily journal yet put forth its claims. Neither to prompt and correct intelligence, nor to great political or philanthropic aims, did it as yet devote itself. The triumphs or discomfitures of Freedom were not yet its daily themes. Not yet did it presume or dare to ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm of great political passions; to grapple resistlessly with social abuses; or to take broad and philosophic views of the world's contemporaneous history, the history which is a-making from day to day. It was content with humbler duties. It called itself a daily register of commerce and intelligence, and fell short of even so much modest pretension. The letter of a Probus or a Manlius sufficed for

discussion of the war ; and a modest rumour in some dozen lines, for what had occupied parliament during as many days. ' We are unwilling,' said the editor of the *Public Ledger* (Mr. Griffith Jones, who wrote children's books for Mr. Newbery) in his first number, ' to raise expectations ' which we may perhaps find ourselves unable to satisfy ; ' and therefore have made no mention of criticism or ' literature, which yet we do not professedly exclude ; nor ' shall we reject any political essays which are apparently ' calculated for the public good.' Discreetly avoiding, thus, all undue expectation, there quietly came forth into the world, from Mr. Bristow's office ' next the great toy-shop in St. Paul's Church-yard,' the first number of the *Public Ledger*. It was circulated gratis : with announcement that all future numbers would be sold for twopence half-penny each.

The first four numbers were enlightened by Probus in politics and Sir Simeon Swift in literature ; the one defending the war, the other commencing the ' Ranger,' and both very mildly justifying the modest editorial announcements. The fifth number was not so common-place. It had a letter (vindicating with manly assertion the character and courage of the then horribly unpopular French, and humorously condemning the national English habit of abusing rival nations), which implied a larger spirit as it showed a livelier pen. The same hand again appeared in the next number but one ; and the correspondent of Green Arbour Court became entitled to



receive two guineas from Mr. Newbery for his first week's contributions to the *Public Ledger*. His arrangement was to write twice in the week, and to be paid a guinea for each article.

With the second week he had taken greater courage. The letter which appeared on the 24th of January, though without title or numbering to imply intention of continuance, threw out the hint of a series of letters, and of a kind of narrative as in the *Lettres Persanes*. The character assumed was that of a Chinese visitor to London: the writer's old interest in the flowery people having received new strength, of late, from the translated Chinese novel of his dignified acquaintance Doctor Percy. The second letter, still without title, appeared five days after the first; some inquiry seems to have been made for their continuance; and thence uninterruptedly the series went on. Not until somewhat advanced, were they even numbered; they never received a title, until republished; but they were talked of as the Chinese Letters, assumed the principal place in the paper, and contributed more than any other cause to its establishment. Sir Simeon Swift and his 'Ranger,' Mr. Philanthropy Candid and his 'Visitor,' struggled and departed as newspaper shadows are wont to do; Lien Chi Altangi became real, and lived. From the ephemeral sprang the immortal. On that column of ungainly-looking, perishable type, depended not alone the paper of the day, but a book to last throughout the year, a continuous pleasure for the age, and one

which was for all time. It amused the hour, was wise for the interval beyond it, is still diverting and instructing us, and will delight generations yet unborn. At the close of 1760, ninety-eight of the letters had been published; within the next few months, at less regular intervals, the series was brought to completion; and in the following year, the whole were republished by Mr. Newbery, in two duodecimo volumes, without any author's name, as '*The Citizen of the World*; or, Letters from a Chinese Philosopher residing in London, to his friends in the East.'

'Light, agreeable, summer reading,' observed the *British Magazine*, with but dry and laconic return for the Wow-wow. The *Monthly Review* had to make return of a different kind, Mr. Griffiths now decently resolving to swallow his leek; and Kenrick, his pliant cur, having taken his orders to abstain from bark or bite and whine approbation and apology, thus did his master's bidding, in his master's name: 'The public have been already made sufficiently acquainted with the merit of these entertaining letters, which were first printed in the *Ledger*, and are supposed to have contributed not a little towards the success of that paper. They are said to be the work of the lively and ingenious writer of *An Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe*; a writer whom it seems we undesignedly offended by some strictures on the conduct of many of our modern scribblers. As the observation was

‘entirely general in its intention, we were surprised to hear that this gentleman had imagined himself in any degree pointed at; as we conceive nothing can be more illiberal in a writer, or more foreign to the character of a literary journal, than to descend to the meanness of personal reflection.’ Pity might be reasonably given to men humiliated thus; but Goldsmith withheld forgiveness. Private insults could not so be retracted; nor could imputations which sink deepest in the simplest and most honourable natures, be thus easily purged away. Mr. Griffiths was left to the consolation of reflecting, that he had himself eaten the dirt which it would have made him far happier to have flung at the *Citizen of the World*.

In what different language, by what different men, how highly and justly this book has since been praised, for its fresh original perception, its delicate delineation of life and manners, its wit and humour, its playful and diverting satire, its exhilarating gaiety, and its clear and lively style, need not be repeated. What is to be said of it here, will have more relation to the character than to the genius of its writer. The steadier direction of his thoughts, and the changing aspect of his fortunes, are what I would now turn back to read in it.

One marked peculiarity its best admirers have failed to observe upon; its detection and exposure, not simply of the foibles and follies which lie upon the surface, but of those more pregnant evils which rankle at the heart, of society. The occasions were frequent in which the

Chinese citizen so lifted his voice that only in a later generation could he find his audience ; and they were not few, in which he has failed to find one even yet. He warned the all-powerful English of their insecure tenure of the American colonies ; telling them, with a truth as prophetic, that England would not lose her vigour when those colonies obtained their independence. He unveiled the social pretences, which, under colour of protecting female honour, are made the excuse for its violation. He denounced that evil system which left the magistrate, the country justice, and the squire, to punish transgressions in which they had themselves been the guiltiest transgressors. He laughed at the sordidness which makes penny shows of our public temples, turns Deans and Chapters into importunate 'beggars,' and stoops to pick up half-pence at the tombs of our patriots and poets. He protested earnestly against the insufficient pretexts that availed for the spilling of blood, in the contest then raging between France and England. He inveighed against the laws which meted out, in so much gold or silver, the price of a wife's or daughter's honour. He ridiculed the prevailing nostrums current in that age of quacks ; doubted the graces of such betailing and bepowdering fashions, as then made beauty hideous, and sent even lads cocked-hatted and wigged to school ; and had sense and courage to avow his contempt for that prevailing cant of connoisseurship ('your Raffaelles, Correggios, and Stuff') at which Reynolds shifted his trumpet. The abuses of

church patronage did not escape him ; any more than the tendency to 'superstition and imposture' in the 'bonzes' and priests of all religions.' He thought it a fit theme for mirth, that holy men should be content to receive all the money, and let others do all the good ; and that preferment to the most sacred and exalted duties should wait upon the whims of members of parliament, and the wants of younger branches of the nobility. The incapacities and neglect thus engendered in the upper clergy, he also connected with that disregard of the lower, which left a reverend Trulliber undisturbed among his pigs, and a parson Adams to his ale in Lady Booby's kitchen. Yet as little was he disposed to tolerate any false reaction from such indifference ; and at the ascetic saints of the new religious sect, which had risen to put down cheerfulness and could find its only music in a chorus of sighs and groans, he aimed the shafts of his wit as freely, as at the over-indulging, gormandising priests of the Bishop's visitation-dinner, face to face with whom, gorged and groaning with excess, he brought the hungry beggar, faint with want, to ask of them the causes of his utter destitution, body and soul. Nor did he spare that other dignified profession, which, in embarrassing what it professed to make clear, in retarding with cumbrous impediments the steps of Justice, in reserving as a luxury for the rich what it pretended to throw open to all, in fencing round Property with a multiplicity of laws and exposing Poverty without a guard to whatever threatened or assailed it, countenanced and practised no less a false-

hood. Almost alone in that age of indifference, the Citizen of the World raised his voice against the penal laws which then, with wanton severity, disgraced the statute book; insisted that the sole means of making death an efficient, was to make it an infrequent, punishment; and warned society of the crime of disregarding human life and the temptations of the miserable, by visiting petty thefts with penalties of blood.

He who does not read for amusement only, may also find in these delightful letters, thus published from week to week, a comment of special worth on casual incidents of the time. There was in this year a city campaign of peculiar cruelty. A mob has indiscriminate tastes for blood, and after hunting an Admiral Byng to death will as eagerly run down a dog. On a groundless cry of hydrophobia, dogs were slaughtered wholesale, and their bodies literally blocked up the streets. 'The dear, good-natured, honest, sensible creatures!' exclaimed Horace Walpole; 'Christ! How can anybody hurt them?' But what Horace said to his friend, Goldsmith said to everybody: publicly denouncing the cruelty; in a series of witty stories, ridiculing the motives alleged for it; and pleading with eloquent warmth for the honest associate of man. Nor was this the only mad-dog-cry of the year. The yell of a Grub Street mob as fierce, on a false report of the death of Voltaire, brought Goldsmith as warmly to the rescue. With eager admiration, he asserted the claims of the philosopher and wit; told the world it was

its lusts of war and sycophancy which unfitted it to receive such a friend ; set forth the independence of his life, in a country of Pompadours and an age of venal oppression ; declared (this was before the Calas family) the tenderness and humanity of his nature ; and claimed freedom of religious thought for him and all men. ‘ I am not displeased with my brother because he happens to ask our father for favours in a different manner from me.’ As we read the Chinese Letters with this comment of the time, those actual days come vividly back to us. Earl Ferrers glides through them again, with his horrible passion and yet more ghastly composure. The theatres again contend with their Pollys and Macheaths, and tire the town with perpetual *Beggars’ Operas*. Merry and fashionable crowds repeople White Conduit and Vauxhall. We get occasional glimpses of even the stately commoner and his unstately ducal associate. Old George the Second dies, and young George the Third ascends the throne. Churchill makes his hit with the *Rosciad* ; and Sterne, having startled the town with the humour and extravagance of his *Tristram Shandy*, comes up from country quiet to enjoy popularity.

How sudden and decisive it was, need not be related. No one was so talked of in London this year, no one so admired, as that tall, thin, hectic-looking Yorkshire parson. He who was to die within eight years, unheeded and untended, in a common lodging-house, was everywhere the honoured guest of the rich and noble. His

book had become a fashion, and East and West were moved alike. Mr. Dodsley offered him £650 for a second edition and two more volumes; Lord Falconberg gave him a curacy of £150 a year; Mr. Reynolds painted his portrait; and Warburton, not having yet pronounced him an 'irre-  
'coverable scoundrel,' went round to the bishops and told them he was the English Rabelais. 'They had never  
'heard of such a writer,' adds the sly narrator of the incident. 'One is invited to dinner where he dines,' said Gray, 'a fortnight beforehand;' and he boasted, himself, of dinner engagements fourteen deep: even while he declared the way to fame to be like that to heaven, through much tribulation; and described himself, in the midst of his triumphs, 'attacked and pelted from cellar and garret.' Perhaps he referred to Goldsmith, from whose garret in Green Arbour Court the first heavy blow was levelled at him; but there were other assailants, as active though less avowed, in cellars of Arlington Street and garrets of Strawberry Hill. Walpole may yet more easily be forgiven than Goldsmith, in such a case. The attack in the *Citizen of the World* was aimed, it is true, where the work was most vulnerable; and it was not ill done to protest against the indecency and affectation, which doubtless had largely contributed to the so sudden popularity, as they found promptest imitators: but the humour and wit ought surely to have been admitted; and if the wisdom and charity of an uncle Toby, a Mr. Shandy, or a Corporal Trim, might anywhere have claimed frank and immediate recognition, it should have



been in that series of essays which Beau Tibbs and the Gentleman in Black have helped to make immortal.

Most charming are these two characters. Addison would have admired, and Steele delighted in them. Finery and poverty, surliness and good-nature, were never brought together with more playful wit, or a more tender sweetness. Fielding's majestic Major, who will hear of nothing less than the honour and dignity of a man, and is caught in an old woman's bedgown warming his sick sister's posset, is not a nobler specimen of manhood than the one; Steele's friend at the Trumpet Club, that very insignificant fellow but exceeding gracious, who has but a bare subsistence yet is always promising to introduce you into the world, who answers to matters of no consequence with great circumspection, maintains an insolent benevolence to all whom he has to do with, and will desire one of ten times his substance to let him see him sometimes, hinting that he does not forget him, is not more delicious in his vanity than the other. The country ramble of the Man in Black, wherein, to accompaniment of the most angry invective, he performs acts of the most exquisite charity; where with harsh loud voice he denounces the poor, while with wistful compassionate face he relieves them; where, by way of detecting imposture, he domineeringly buys a shilling's worth of matches, receives the astonished beggar's whole bundle and blessing, and, intimating that he has taken in the seller and shall make money of his bargain, bestows them next moment on a tramper with an objur-

gation; is surely never to be read unmoved. For Beau Tibbs, who has not laughed at and loved him, from the first sorry glimpse of his faded finery? Who has not felt, in the airs of wealth and grandeur with which his amusing impudence puffs up his miserable poverty, that he makes out a title to good-natured cheerfulness and thorough enjoyment, which all the real wealth might have purchased cheaply? What would his friends Lords Muddler and Crump, the Duchess of Piccadilly or the Countess of Allnight, have given for it? Gladly, for but a tithe of it, might the lords have put up with his two shirts, and uncomplainingly the ladies assisted Mrs. Tibbs in seeing them through the wash-tub. It is an elegant little dinner he talks of giving his friend, with bumpers of wine, a turbot, an ortolan, and what not: but who would not as soon have had the smart bottled-beer which was all he had to give, with the nice pretty bit of ox-cheek, piping-hot, and dressed with a little of Mrs. Tibbs' own sauce which 'his grace' was so fond of? It is supposed that this exquisite sketch had a living original in one of Goldsmith's casual acquaintance; a person named Thornton, once in the army.

This is not improbable, any more than that the beau's two shirts might have been copied from Goldsmith's own: for everywhere throughout the Letters actual incidents appear, and the 'White Mouse and Prince Bonbennin' had an origin whimsical as the story itself. Mr. Newbery's two guineas a-week would seem to have attracted weekly

levies, in a double sense, from Grub Street ; at which Pilkington, son of the notorious Lætitia, was most assiduous. But with other than his usual begging aspect, he appeared in Green Arbour Court one day ; for good luck had dawned on him at last, he said, and his troubles were over. Two guineas (and he ran about the room for joy of the announcement) were all he wanted to make his fortune. There was a great duchess who gave the most astonishing prices for curious animals, and a friend had sent him over two white mice from India for which her grace had expressed a fancy ; they were on board a ship in the river ; the duchess was waiting for them ; and two guineas would buy a cage, as well as a coat to present them in. But what was to be done, for Goldsmith had only half a guinea ? The anxious client pointed to a watch, with which his poor patron (indulging in a luxury which Johnson did not possess till he was sixty) had lately enriched himself ; timidly suggested one week's loan as a solution of the difficulty ; and carried it off with the last half-guinea. And though Goldsmith never again had tidings of either, or of the curious white mice, till a paragraph in the *Public Ledger* informed him of certain equivocal modes whereby ' Mr. P—lk—g—on was endeavouring to raise money ;' yet a messenger, not long afterward, carried to the poor starving creature's death-bed ' a guinea from Mr. Goldsmith.'

The same journal (by the favour of an old friend, Kenrick) described for the public at the same time an amusing adventure in White Conduit Gardens, of which

no other than 'Mr. G—d—th' himself was the hero. Strolling through that scene of humble holiday, he seems to have met the wife and two daughters of an honest tradesman who had done him some service, and invited them to tea; but after much enjoyment of the innocent repast he discovered a want of money to discharge the bill, and had to undergo some ludicrous annoyances, and entertain his friends at other expense than he had bargained for, before means were found for his release. Another contemporary anecdote reverses this picture a little, and exhibits him paymaster, at the Chapter Coffee House, for Churchill's friend Charles Lloyd, who in his careless way, without a shilling to pay for the entertainment, had invited him to sup with some friends of Grub Street. A third incident of the same date presents him with a similar party at Blackwall, where so violent a dispute arose about *Tristram Shandy* at the dinner-table, that personalities led to blows, and the feast ended in a fight. 'Why, sir,' said Johnson, laughing, when Boswell told him some years later of a different kind of fracas in which their friend had been engaged, 'I believe it is the first time he has *beat*; ' he may have been *beaten* before. This, sir, is a new 'plume to him.' If the somewhat doubtful surmise of the beating be correct, the scene of it was Blackwall; and if the story Hawkins tells about the trick played off by Roubiliac (which, like all such tricks, tells against both the parties to it) be also true, this was the time when it happened. The 'little' sculptor, as he is called in the

Chinese Letters, being a familiar acquaintance, and fond of music, Goldsmith would play the flute for him; and to such assumed delight on the part of his listener did he do this one day, that Roubiliac, protesting he must copy the air upon the spot, took up a sheet of paper, scored a few lines and spaces (the form of the notes being all he knew of the matter), and with random blotches pretended to take down the time as repeated by the good-natured musician; while gravely, and with great attention, Goldsmith, surveying these musical hieroglyphics, 'said they were very correct, and that if he had not seen 'him do it, he never could have believed his friend capable 'of writing music after him.' Sir John Hawkins tells the story with much satisfaction. Exposure of an ignorant flute-player, with nothing but vulgar accomplishments of 'ear' to bestow upon his friends, gives great delight to pompous Hawkins, as a learned historian of music.

So passed the thoughtless life of Goldsmith in his first year of success: if so may be called the scanty pittance which served to expose his foibles, but not to protect him from their consequence. So may his life be read in these Letters to the *Public Ledger*; and still with the comment of pleasure and instruction for others, though at the cost of suffering to himself. His habits as well as thoughts are in them. He is at the theatre, enjoying Garrick's *Abel Druggier* and laughing at all who call it 'low'; a little tired of *Polly* and *Macheath*; not at all interested by the famous and fortunate tumbler who, between the acts of

tragedies as well as farces, balances a straw upon his nose ; and zig-zagging his way home after all is over, through a hundred obstacles from coach-wheels and palanquin-poles, 'like a bird in its flight through the branches of a forest.' He is a visitor at the humble pot-house clubs, whose follies and enjoyments he moralizes with touching pleasantry. 'Were I to be angry at men for being fools, I could here have found ample room for declamation ; but, alas ! I have been a fool myself, and why should I be angry with them for being something so natural to every child of humanity.' Unsparing historian of this folly of his own, he conceals his imprudence as little as his poverty ; and his kind heart he has not the choice to conceal. Everywhere it betrays itself. In hours of depression, recalling the disastrous fate of men of genius, and 'mighty poets in their misery dead ;' in imaginary interviews with book-sellers, laughing at their sordid mistakes ; in remonstrances with his own class, warning them of the danger of despising each other ; and in rarer periods of perfect self-reliance, asserting the power and claims of men of letters, and denouncing the short-sightedness of statesmen. 'Instead of complaining that writers are over-paid, when their works procure them a bare subsistence, I should imagine it the duty of a State not only to encourage their numbers, but their industry . . . A man of letters at present, whose works are valuable, is perfectly sensible of their value. Every polite member of the community, by buying what he writes, contributes to reward him. The ridicule of

‘ living in a garret might have been wit in the last age,  
‘ but continues such no longer.’

The quiet composure of this passage exhibits the healthiest aspect of his mind. Bookseller and public are confronted calmly, and the consequences fairly challenged. It is indeed very obvious, at the close of this first year of the *Public Ledger*, that increasing opportunities of employment (to say nothing of the constant robbery of his writings by pirate magazine-men) were really teaching him his value, and suggesting hopes he had not earlier dared to entertain. He resumed his connection with the *Lady's Magazine*, and became its editor: publishing in it, among other writings known and unknown, what he had written of his *Life of Voltaire*; and retiring from its editorship at the close of a year, when he had raised its circulation (if Mr. Wilkie's advertisements are to be believed) to three thousand three hundred. He continued his contributions, meanwhile, to the *British Magazine*; from which he was not wholly separated till two months before poor Smollett, pining for the loss of his only daughter, went upon the continent (in 1763) never to return to a fixed or settled residence in London. He furnished other booksellers with occasional compilation-prefaces; and he gave some papers (among them a *Life of Christ and Lives of the Fathers*, re-published with his name, in shilling pamphlets, a few months after his death) to a so-called *Christian Magazine*, undertaken by Newbery in connection with the macaroni parson Dodd, and conducted by that villainous

pretender as an organ of fashionable divinity. It seems to follow as of course upon these engagements, that the room in Green Arbour Court should at last be exchanged for one of greater comfort. He had left that place in the later months of 1760, and gone into what were called respectable lodgings in Wine Office Court, Fleet Street. The house belonged to a relative of Newbery's, and he occupied two rooms in it for nearly two years.

A circumstance occurred in this new abode which must have endeared it always to his remembrance; but more deeply associated with the wretched habitation he had left, were days of a most forlorn misery as well as of a manly resolution, and round that beggarly dwelling, and all connected with it, there crowded to the last the kindest memories of his gentle and true nature. Thus, when bookseller Davies tells us, after his death, how tender and compassionate he was; how no unhappy person ever sued to him for relief, without obtaining it if he had anything to give; and how he would borrow, rather than not relieve the distressed: he adds that 'the poor woman with whom he had lodged ' during his obscurity several years in Green Arbour Court, ' by his death lost an excellent friend; for the Doctor ' often supplied her with food from his own table, and ' visited her frequently with the sole purpose to be kind to ' her.' As little, in connection with Wine Office Court, could he forget that Johnson first visited him there.

They had probably met before. I have shown how frequently the thoughts of Goldsmith vibrated to that



great Grub Street figure of independence and manhood, which, in an age not remarkable for either, was undoubtedly presented in the person of the author of the *English Dictionary*. One of the last Chinese Letters had again alluded to 'the Johnsons and Smolletts' as veritable poets, though they might never have made a verse in their whole lives; and among the earliest greetings of the new essay-writer, I suspect that Johnson's would be found. The opinion expressed in his generous question of a few years later ('Is there a man, sir, now, who can pen an 'essay with such ease and elegance as Goldsmith?') he was not the man to wait for the world to help him to. Himself connected with Newbery, and engaged in like occupation, the new adventurer wanted his helping word, and would be therefore sure to have it; nor, if it had not been a hearty one, is Doctor Percy likely to have busied himself to bring about the present meeting. It was arranged by that grave divine. It was the first time, he says, he had seen them together. The day fixed was the 31st of May 1761, and Goldsmith gave a supper in Wine Office Court in honour of his visitor.

Percy called to take up Johnson at Inner Temple Lane, and found him, to his great astonishment, in a marked condition of cleanliness and neatness; without his rusty brown suit or his soiled shirt, his loose knee-breeches, his unbuckled shoes, or his old little shrivelled unpowdered wig; and not at all likely, as Miss Reynolds tells us his fashion in these days was, to be mistaken for a beggarman. He had been

seen in no such respectable garb since he appeared behind Garrick's scenes on the first of the nine nights of *Irene*, in a scarlet gold-laced waistcoat, and rich gold-laced hat. In fact, says Percy, 'he had on a new suit of clothes, a 'new wig nicely powdered, and everything so dissimilar 'from his usual habits, that I could not resist the impulse 'of inquiring the cause of such rigid regard in him to 'exterior appearance. "Why, sir," he answered, "I hear "that Goldsmith, who is a very great sloven, justifies his "disregard of cleanliness and decency by quoting my "practice; and I am desirous this night to show him "a better example."' The example was not lost, as extracts from tailors' bills will shortly show; and the anecdote, which offers pleasant proof of the interest already felt by Johnson for his new acquaintance, is our only record connected with that memorable supper. It had no Boswell-historian, and is gone into oblivion. But the friendship which dates from it will never pass away.

'Farewell,' says Milton, at the close of one of his early letters to his friend Gill, 'and on Tuesday next expect 'me in London among the booksellers.' The booksellers were of little mark in Milton's days; but the presence of such men among them began a social change important to both, and not ill expressed in an incident of the days I am describing, when Horace Walpole met the wealthy representative of the profits of *Paradise Lost* at a great party at the Speaker's, while Johnson was appealing to public charity for the last destitute descendant of Milton.

But from the now existing compact between trade and letters, the popular element could not wholly be excluded ; and, to even the weariest drudge, hope was a part of it. From the loopholes of Paternoster Row, he could catch glimpses of the world. Churchill had emerged, and Sterne, for a few brief years ; and but that Johnson had sunk into idleness, he might have been reaping a harvest more continuous than theirs, and yet less dependant on the trade. Drudgery is not good, but flattery and falsehood are worse ; and it had become plain to Goldsmith, even since the days of the *Enquiry*, how much better it was for men of letters to live by the labour of their hands till more original labour became popular with trading patrons, than to wait with their hands across till great men came to feed them. Whatever the call that Newbery or any other bookseller made, then, he was there to answer it. He had the comfort of remembering that the patron had himself patrons ; that something of their higher influence had been attracted to his *Chinese Letters* ; and that he was not slaving altogether without hope.

His first undertaking in 1762 was a pamphlet on the *Cock Lane Ghost*, for which Newbery paid him three guineas : but whether, with Johnson, he thought the impudent imposture worth grave enquiry ; or, with Hogarth, turned it to wise purposes of satire ; or only laughed at it as Churchill did ; the pamphlet has not survived to inform us. His next labour was the revision of a *History of Mechlenburg from the first settlement of the Vandals*

*in that country*, which the settlement of the young Queen Charlotte in this country was expected to make popular ; and for which he received £20. For a subsequent payment of £10, he assisted Newbery with an *Art of Poetry on a New Plan* ; in other words, a compilation of poetical extracts ; and concurrently with this, Mr. Newbery begged leave to offer to the young gentlemen and ladies of these kingdoms a *Compendium of Biography* ; or an history of the lives of those great personages, both ancient and modern, who are most worthy of their esteem and imitation, and most likely to inspire their minds with a love of virtue ; for which offering to the juvenile mind, being a sort of abridgment of Plutarch, he paid Goldsmith at the rate of about eight pounds a volume. The volumes were brief, published monthly, and to have gone through many months if the scheme had thriven ; but it fell before Dilly's *British Plutarch*, and perished with the seventh volume. Nor did it run without danger even this ignoble career. Illness fell upon the compiler in the middle of the fifth volume. 'Dear Sir,' he wrote to Newbery, 'As I have been out of order for some time past, and am 'still not quite recovered, the fifth volume of Plutarch's 'Lives remains unfinished. I fear I shall not be able to do 'it unless there be an actual necessity, and that none 'else can be found. If therefore you would send it to 'Mr. Collier, I should esteem it a kindness, and I will 'pay for whatever it may come to. N.B. I received 'twelve guineas for the two volumes. I am, Sir, Your

‘obliged humble servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH. Pray let me have an answer.’ The answer was not favourable. Twelve guineas had been advanced, the two volumes were due, and Mr. Collier, though an ingenious man, was not Mr. Goldsmith. ‘Sir,’ returned the latter coldly, ‘One volume *is* done, namely the fourth. When I said I should be glad Mr. Collier would do the fifth for me, I only demanded it as a favour; but if he cannot conveniently do it, though I have kept my chamber these three weeks, and am not quite recovered, yet I will do it. I send it per bearer; and if the affair puts you to the least inconvenience, return it, and it shall be done immediately. I am, &c. O. G. The printer has the copy of the rest.’ To this, his good nature having returned, Newbery acceded; and the book was finished by Collier, to whom a share of the pittance advanced had of course to be returned.

These paltry advances are a hopeless entanglement. They bar freedom of judgment on anything proposed, and escape is felt to be impossible. Some days, some weeks perhaps, have been lost in idleness or illness; the future becomes a mortgage to the past; every hour has its want, forestalled upon the labour of the succeeding hour; and Gulliver lies bound in Lilliput. ‘Sir,’ said Johnson, who had excellent experience on this head, ‘you may escape a heavy debt, but not a small one. Small debts are like small shot; they are rattling on every side, and can scarcely be escaped without a wound.

‘Great debts are like cannon, of loud noise but little danger.’

Mention of Goldsmith’s illness now frequently recurs. It originated in the habits of his London life, contrasting with the activity and movement they had replaced; and the remedy prescribed was change of scene, if change of life was impossible. He is to be traced in this year to Tunbridge and Bath; I find him known to Mr. Wood, whose solid and tasteful architecture was ennobling the latter city; and one of Mr. Newbery’s pithy acknowledgments is connected with those brief residences, where the *improbus labor* had not failed to follow him. ‘Received from Mr. Newbery at different times, and for which gave receipts, fourteen guineas, which is in full for the copy of the Life of Mr. Nash. Oliver Goldsmith.’ The recent death of the celebrated Beau had suggested a subject, which, with incidents in its comedy of manners that recommended it to a man of wit in our own day, had some to recommend it to Goldsmith. The king of fashion had at least the oddity of a hero; and harmlessness, not to say usefulness, to make him original among heroes and kings. It is a clever book; and as one examines the original edition with its 234 goodly pages, still not uncommon on the book-stalls, it appears quite a surprising performance for fourteen guineas. No name was on the title-page; but the writer, whose powers were so various and performance so felicitous, ‘that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing,’ finds it difficult not to reveal his name.

The preface was discerningly written. That a man who had diffused society and made manners more cheerful and refined, should have claims to attention from his own age, while his pains in pursuing pleasure, and his solemnity in adjusting trifles, were a claim to even the smile of posterity, was so set forth as to reassure the stateliest reader; and if somewhat thrown back by the biographer's bolder announcement in the opening of his book, that a page of Montaigne or Colley Cibber was worth more than the most grandiose memoirs of 'immortal statesmen 'already forgotten,' he had but to remember after how many years of uninterrupted power the old Duke of Newcastle had just resigned, to think that as grave a lesson might really await him in the reign of an old minister of fashion.

In truth the book is neither uninformative nor unamusing; and it is difficult not to connect some points of the biographer's own history with its oddly mixed anecdotes of silliness and shrewdness, taste and tawdriness, blossom-coloured coats and gambling debts, vanity, carelessness, and good-heartedness. The latter quality in its hero was foiled by a want of prudence which deprived it of half its value: and the extenuation is so frequently and so earnestly set forth in connection with the fault, as, with what we now know of the writer, to convey a sort of uneasy personal reference. Remembering, indeed, that what we know now was not only unknown then, but even waiting for what remained of Goldsmith's life to develop

and call it forth, this *Life of Beau Nash* is in some respects a curious, and was probably an unconscious, revelation of character. Hitherto careless in his wardrobe, and unknown to the sartorial books of Mr. William Filby, he gravely discusses the mechanical and moral influence of dress, in the exaction of respect and esteem. Quite ignorant, as yet, of his own position among the remarkable men of his time, he dwells strongly on that class of impulsive virtues, which, in a man otherwise distinguished, are more adapted to win friends than admirers, and more capable of raising love than esteem. A stranger still to the London whist table, even to the moderate extent in which he subsequently sought its excitement and relief, he sets forth with singular pains the temptation of a man who has 'led a life of expedients, 'and thanked chance for his support,' to become a stranger to prudence, and fly back to chance for those 'vicissitudes of rapture and anguish,' in which his character had been formed. With light and shade that might seem of any choosing but his, he exhibits the moral qualities of Nash, as of one whose virtues, in almost every instance, received some tincture from the follies most nearly neighbouring them ; who, though very poor, was very fine, and spread out the little gold he had as thinly and far as it would go, but whose poverty was the more to be regretted, that it denied him the indulgence not only of his favourite follies, but of his favourite virtues ; who had pity for every creature's distress, but wanted



prudence in the application of his benefits, and in whom this ill-controlled sensibility was so strong, that, unable to witness the misfortunes of the miserable, he was always borrowing money to relieve them; who had notwithstanding done a thousand good things, and whose greatest vice was vanity. The self-painted picture will appear more striking as this narrative proceeds; and it would seem to have the same sort of unconscious relation to the future, that one of Nash's friends is mentioned in the book to have gone by the name of *The Good-natured Man*. Nor should I omit the casual evidence of acquaintanceship between its hero and his biographer that occurs in a lively notice of the three periods of amatory usage which the beau's long life had witnessed, and in which not only had flaxen bobs been succeeded by majors, and negligents been routed by bags and ramilies, but the modes of making love had varied as much as the periwigs. 'The only way to make love now, I have heard Mr. Nash say, was to take no manner of notice of the lady.'

Johnson's purchase of this book, which is charged to him in one of Newbery's accounts, shews his interest in whatever affected Goldsmith at this opening of their friendship. His book purchases were never abundant; though better able to afford them now than at any previous time, for the May of this year had seen a change in his fortunes. Bute's pensions to his Scottish crew shewing meaner than ever in Churchill's daring verse, it occurred to the shrewd and wary Wedderburne (whose sister had

married the favourite's most intimate friend) to advise, for a set-off, that Samuel Johnson should be pensioned. Of all the wits at the Grecian or the Bedford, Arthur Murphy, who had been some months fighting the *North Briton* with the *Auditor*, and was now watching the Courts at Westminster preparatory to his first circuit in the following year, was best known to Bute's rising lawyer; and Arthur was sent to Johnson. It was an 'abode of wretchedness,' said this messenger of glad tidings, describing on his return those rooms of Inner Temple Lane where a visitor of some months before had found the Author of the *Rambler* and *Rasselas*, now fifty-three years old, without pen, ink, or paper, 'in poverty, total idleness, and the pride of literature.' Yet great as was the poverty, and glad the tidings, a shade passed over Johnson's face. 'He asked if it was seriously intended.' Undoubtedly. His Majesty, to reward literary merit, and with no desire that the author of the *English Dictionary* should 'dip his pen in faction' (these were Bute's own words), had signified through the Premier his pleasure to grant to Samuel Johnson three hundred pounds a year. 'He fell into a profound meditation; and his own definition of a pensioner occurred to him.' He was told that 'he, at least, did not come within the definition;' but it was not till after dinner with Murphy at the Mitre on the following day, that he consented to wait on Bute and accept the proffered bounty. To be pensioned with the fraudulent and contemptible Shebbeare, so lately pillo-

ried for a Jacobite libel on the Revolution of '88; to find himself in the same Bute list with a Scotch Court Architect, with a Scotch Court painter, with the infamous David Mallet, and with Johnny Home, must have chafed his pride a little; and when, in a few more months, as author of another *English Dictionary*, old Sheridan the actor received two hundred a year (because his theatre had suffered in the Dublin riots, pleaded Wedderburne; because he had gone to Edinburgh to teach Bute's friend to talk English, said Wilkes), it had become very plain to him that Lord Bute knew nothing of literature. But he had compromised no independence in the course he took, and might afford to laugh at the outcry which followed. 'I wish my pension were twice as large, sir,' he said afterwards at Davies's, 'that they might make 'twice as much noise.'

Thomas Davies had now (with his 'very pretty wife') left the stage and taken wholly to bookselling, which he had recently, and for the second time, attempted to combine with acting. The *Rosciad* put a final extinguisher on his theatrical existence. He never afterwards mouthed a sentence in one of the kingly and heavy parts he was in the habit of playing, that Churchill's image of cur and bone did not confuse the sentence that followed; his eye never fell upon any prominent figure in the front row of the pit, that he did not tremble to fancy it the brawny person of Churchill. What he thus lost in self-possession, Garrick meanwhile lost in temper; and matters came to a breach,

in which Johnson, being appealed to, took part against Garrick, as he was seldom disinclined to do. Pretty Mrs. Davies may have helped his inclination here; for when seized with his old moody abstraction, as was not unusual, in the bookseller's parlour, and he began to blow, and *too-too*, and mutter prayers to be delivered from temptation, Davies would whisper his wife with waggish humour, 'You, my dear, are the cause of this.' But, be the cause what it might, the pompous little bibliopole never afterwards lost favour; and it became as natural for men interested in Johnson or those who clustered round him, to repair to Davies the bookseller's in Russell Street, as for those who wanted to hear of George Selwyn, Lord March, or Lord Carlisle, to call at Betty the fruiterer's in St. James' Street.

A frequent visitor was Goldsmith; his thick, short, clumsy figure, and his awkward though genial manners, oddly contrasting with Doctor Percy's, precise, reserved, and stately. The high bred and courtly Beauclerc might deign to saunter in. Often would be seen there, the broad, fat face of Foote, with wicked humour flashing from the eye; and sometimes the mild long face of Bennet Langton, filled with humanity and gentleness. There had Goldsmith met a rarer visitor, the bland and gracious Reynolds, soon after his first introduction to him, a few months back, in Johnson's chambers; and there would even Warburton drive in his equipage 'besprinkled with mitres,' on some proud business of his own, after calling on Garrick in

Southampton Street. For Garrick himself, it was perhaps the only place of meeting he cared to avoid, in that neighbourhood which had so profited and been gladdened by his genius; in which his name was oftener resounded than that of any other human being; and throughout which we are told there was a fondness for him, that, as his sprightly figure passed along, 'darted electrically from 'shop to shop.' What the great actor said some years later, indeed, he already seems to have fancied: that 'he 'believed most authors who frequented Mr. Davies's shop 'met merely to abuse him.' Encouraged, meanwhile, by the authors, Davies grew in amusing importance; affected the insides as well outsides of books; set up for a critic, discussed themes of scholarship; inflicted upon everyone his experiences of the Edinburgh university; and when George Steevens called one day to buy the *Oxford Homer*, which he had seen tossing about upon his shelves, was told by the modest bookseller that he had but one, and kept it for his own reading.

Poor Goldsmith's pretensions, as yet, were small in the scale of such conceit; being but the best of the essay writers, not the less bound on that account to unrepining drudgery, somewhat awkward in his manners, and laughed at for a careless simplicity. Such the character he was first seen in here, and he found its impressions always oddly mingled with whatever respect or consideration he challenged in later life. Only Johnson saw into that life as yet, or could measure what the past had been

to him ; and few so well as Goldsmith had reason to know the great heart which beat so gently under those harsh manners. The friendship of Johnson was his first relish of fame ; he repaid it with affection and deference of no ordinary kind ; and so commonly were they seen together, now that Johnson's change of fortune brought him more into the world, that when a caricature of the Idler was threatened this summer by the Haymarket Aristophanes, the Citizen of the World was to be a puppet too. 'What is the common price of an oak stick, sir?' asked Johnson, when he heard of it. 'Sixpence,' answered Davies. 'Why then, sir, give me leave to send your servant to purchase me a shilling one. I'll have a double quantity ; for I am told Foote means to *take me off*, as he calls it, and I am determined the fellow shall not do it with impunity.' The *Orators* came out without the attraction promised : attacking, instead, a celebrated Dublin printer, George Faulkner, who consoled himself (pending his prosecution of the libeller) by pirating the libel and selling it most extensively ; while the satirist had the more doubtful consolation of reflecting, three years later, that his 'taking off' of Faulkner's one leg would have been much more perfect, could he have waited till the surgeon had taken off his own. It was the first dramatic piece, I may add, in which actors were stationed among the audience, and spoke from the public boxes.

It had been suggested by a debating society called the Robin Hood, somewhat famous in those days, which used

to meet near Temple Bar ; with which the connection of Burke's earliest eloquence may make it famous still, since it had numbered among its members that eager Temple student, whose public life was now at last beginning with under-secretary Hamilton in Dublin ; and to which Goldsmith was introduced by Samuel Derrick, his acquaintance and countryman. Struck by the eloquence and imposing aspect of the president, who sat in a large gilt chair, he thought Nature had meant him for a lord chancellor. 'No, no,' whispered Derrick, who knew him to be a wealthy baker from the city, 'only for a master of the rolls.' Goldsmith was little of an orator ; but till Derrick went away to succeed Beau Nash at Bath, seems to have continued his visits, and even spoke occasionally ; for he figures in an account of the members published at about this time, as 'a candid disputant, with a clear 'head and an honest heart, though coming but seldom to 'the society.' The honest heart was worn upon his sleeve, whatever his society might be. He could not even visit the three Cherokees, whom all the world were at this time visiting, without leaving the savage chiefs a trace of it. He gave them some 'trifle' they did not look for ; and so did the gift, or the manner of it, please them, that with a sudden embrace they covered his cheeks with the oil and ochre that plentifully bedaubed their own, and left him to discover, by the laughter which greeted him in the street, the extent and fervour of their gratitude.

Not always so grateful, however, did Goldsmith find the

objects of his always ready kindness. One of the members of this Robin Hood was Peter Annet, a man, who, though ingenious and deserving in other respects, became unhappily notorious by a kind of fanatic crusade against the Bible, for which (publishing weekly papers against the Book of Genesis) he stood twice this year in the pillory, and was now undergoing imprisonment in the King's Bench. To Annet's rooms in that prison we trace Goldsmith. He had brought Newbery with him to conclude the purchase of a child's book on grammar by the prisoner, hoping so to relieve his distress; but on the prudent bookseller suggesting that no name should appear on the title page, and Goldsmith agreeing that circumstances made this advisable, Annet accused them both of cowardice and rejected their assistance with contempt. What the amount of Newbery's assistance would have been, or how much he was likely to have given for the Child's Grammar, it is difficult to say. For the 'completion of a History of England,' he had just given Goldsmith two guineas: which munificent payment was exactly contemporaneous with the completion of another kind of history, on more expensive terms, by Paymaster Henry Fox; from whom twenty-five thousand pounds had gone in one morning, at the formal rate of £200 a vote, to patriotic voters for the Peace.

There is reason to believe (from another of the bookseller's memoranda) that the two guineas was for 'seventy-nine leaves' of addition to a school history, comprising the reign of George the Second, and paid at the rate of eight shillings



a sheet. This payment, with what has before been mentioned, and an addition of five guineas for the assignment and republication of the Chinese Letters (to which Newbery assented reluctantly, and only because Goldsmith would else have printed them 'for the author'), are all the profits of his drudgery which can be traced to him in the present year. It needed to have a cheerful disposition to bear him through; nor was nature chary to him now of that choicest of her gifts. He had some bow of promise shining through his dullest weather. It is supposed that he memorialised Lord Bute, soon after Johnson's pension, with the scheme we have seen him throw out hints of in his review of Van Egmont's *Asia*; and nothing is more probable than that the notion might have revived with him, on hearing Johnson's remark to Langton in connection with his pension. 'Had this happened twenty years ago, I should have gone to Constantinople to learn Arabic as Pocock did.' But what with Samuel Johnson might be 'noble ambition,' with little Goldy was but theme for a jest; and nothing so raised the laugh against him, a few years later, as Johnson's notice of the old favourite project he was still at that time clinging to, that sometime or other, 'when his circumstances should be easier,' he would like to go to Aleppo, and bring home such arts peculiar to the East as he might be able to find there. 'Sir,' said Johnson, 'he would bring home a grinding barrow, which you see in every street in London, and think that he had furnished a wonderful improvement.'

But brighter than these visionary fancies were shining for him now. There is little doubt, from allusions which would most naturally have arisen at the close of the present year, that, in moments snatched from his thankless and ill-rewarded toil for Newbery, he was at last secretly indulging in a labour, which, whatever its effect might be upon his fortunes, was its own thanks and its own reward. He had begun the *Vicar of Wakefield*. Without encouragement or favour in its progress, and with little hope of welcome at the close of it; earning meanwhile, apart from it, his bread for the day by a full day's labour at the desk; it is his 'shame in crowds, his solitary pride' to seize and give shape to its fancies of happiness and home, before they pass for ever. Most affecting, yet also most cheering! With everything before him in his hard life that the poet has placed at the Gates of Hell,

Pallentesque habitant Morbi, tristisque Senectus,  
Et Metus, et malesuada Fames, et turpis Egestas,  
Terribiles visu Formæ, Lethumque, Laborque,

he is content, for himself, to undergo the chances of them all, that for others he may open the neighbouring Elysian Gate. Nor could the effort fail to bring strength of its own, and self-sustained resource. In all else he might be weak and helpless, dependant on other's judgment and doubtful of his own; but, there, it was not so. He took his own course in that. It was not for Mr. Newbery he was writing then. Even the poetical fragments which began in Switzerland are lying still in his desk

untouched. *They* are not to tell for so many pitiful items in the drudgery for existence. They are to 'catch the heart, and strike for honest fame.'

He thought poorly, with exceptions already named in this narrative, of the poetry of the day. He regarded Churchill's astonishing success as a mere proof of the rage of faction; and did not hesitate to call his satires lampoons, and his force turbulence. Fawkes and Woty were now compiling their *Poetical Calendar*, and through Johnson, who contributed, they asked if he would contribute; but he declined. Between himself and Fawkes, who was rector of a small Kentish village he had occasionally visited, civilities had passed; but he shrunk from the Fawkes and Woty poetical school, and did not hesitate to say so. He dined at the close of the year at Davies's, in company with Robert Dodsley, where the matter came into discussion. 'This is not a poetical age,' said Goldsmith; 'there is no poetry produced in it.' 'Nay,' returned Dodsley, 'have you seen my *Collection*. You may not be able to find palaces in it, like Dryden's *Ode*, but you have villages composed of very pretty houses, such as the *Spleen*.' Johnson was not present; but when the conversation was reported to him, he remarked that Dodsley had said the same thing as Goldsmith, only in a softer manner.

Another guest, beside Dodsley, was present at Davies's dinner-table that day. A youth of two-and-twenty, the son of a Scottish judge and respectable old whig Laird,

urged to enter the law but eager to bestow himself on the army, had come up at the end of the year from Edinburgh to see Johnson and the London wits, and not a little anxious that Johnson and the London wits should see him. Attending Sheridan's summer lectures in the northern city, he had heard wonderful things from the lecturer about the solemn and ponderous lexicographer; what he said, and what he did, and how he would talk over his port wine and his tea until three or four o'clock in the morning. It was in the nature of this new admirer that port wine and late hours should throw a new halo over any object of his admiration; and it was with desperate resolve to accomplish an introduction which he had tried and failed in two years before, that he was now again in London. But he had again been baffled. Johnson's sneer at Sheridan's pension having brought coolness between the old friends, that way there was no access; and though Davies had arranged this dinner with the hope of getting his great friend to come, his great friend had found other matters to attend to. James Boswell was not yet to see Samuel Johnson. He saw only Oliver Goldsmith, and was doubtless much disappointed.

Perhaps the feeling was mutual, if Oliver gave a thought to this new acquaintance; and strange enough the dinner must have been. As Goldsmith discussed poetry with Dodsley, Davies, mouthing his words and rolling his head at Boswell, delighted that eager and social gentleman with imitations of Johnson; while, as the bottle emptied

itself more freely, sudden loquacity, conceited coxcombry, and officious airs of consequence, came as freely pouring forth from the youthful Scot. He had to tell them all he had seen in London, and all that had seen him. How Wilkes had said 'how d'ye do' to him, and Churchill had shaken hands with him (Scotchman though he was); how he had been to the Bedford to see that comical fellow Foote, and heard him dashing away at everybody and everything ('have you had good success in Dublin, 'Mr. Foote?') 'Poh! Damn 'em! There was not a 'shilling in the country, except what the Duke of 'Bedford, and I, and Mr. Rigby have brought away'); how he had seen Garrick in the new farce of the *Farmer's Return*, and gone and peeped over Hogarth's shoulder as he sketched little David in the *Farmer*; and how, above all, he had on another night attracted general attention and given prodigious entertainment in the Drury-lane pit, by extempore imitations of the lowing of a cow. 'The 'universal cry of the galleries,' said he, gravely describing the incident some few years afterward, 'was, encore the cow! 'encore the cow! In the pride of my heart I attempted 'imitations of some other animals, but with very inferior 'effect.' A Scotch friend was with him, and gave sensible advice. 'Stick to the cow, mon,' he said; and the advice was not lost altogether. He stuck afterwards to his cow (in other words, to what he could best achieve) pretty closely; though Goldsmith, among others, had no small reason to regret, that he should also, doing the cow so well,

still 'with very inferior effect' attempt imitations of other animals.

But little does Goldsmith or any other man suspect as yet, that within this wine-bibbing, tavern babbler, this meddling, conceited, inquisitive, loquacious lion hunter, this bloated and vain young Scot, lie qualities of reverence, real insight, quick observation, and marvellous memory, which, strangely assorted as they are with those other meaner habits, and parasitical, self-complacent absurdities, will one day connect his name eternally with the men of genius of his time, and enable him to influence posterity in its judgments on them. They seem to have met occasionally before Boswell returned to Edinburgh; but only two of Goldsmith's answers to the other's perpetual and restless questionings, remain to indicate the nature of their intercourse. There lived at this time with Johnson, a strange, silent, grotesque companion, whom he had supported for many years, and continued to keep with him till death; and Boswell could not possibly conceive what the claim of that insignificant Robert Levet could be, on the great object of his own veneration. 'He is 'poor and honest,' was Goldsmith's answer, 'which is 'recommendation enough for Johnson.' Discovery of another object of the great man's charity, however, seemed difficult to be reconciled with this; for here was a man of whom James Boswell had heard a very bad and dishonest character, and, in almost the same breath, that Johnson had been kind to him also. 'He is now become

‘miserable,’ was Goldsmith’s quiet explanation, ‘and that ensures the protection of Johnson.’

Newbery’s memoranda and account books carry us, at the close of 1762, to a country lodging in Islington, kept by a stout and elderly lady named Mrs. Elizabeth Fleming, and inhabited by Oliver Goldsmith. He is said to have moved here to be near the publisher, who had chambers at the time in Canonbury Tower; but he had doubtless a stronger inducement in thus escaping, for weeks together, from the crowded noise of Wine Office Court (where he retained a lodging for town uses), to comparative quiet and healthy air. There were still green fields and lanes in Islington. Glimpses were discernible yet, even of the old time when the Tower was Elizabeth’s hunting seat, and the country all about was woodland. There were walks where houses were not, nor terraces, nor taverns; and where stolen hours might be given to precious thought, in the intervals of toilsome labour.

That he had come here with designs of labour, more constant and unremitting than ever, new and closer arrangements with Newbery would seem to indicate. The publisher made himself, with certain prudent limitations, Mrs. Fleming’s paymaster; board and lodging were to be charged £50 a year (the reader has to keep in mind that this would be now nearly double that amount), and, when the state of their accounts permitted it, to be paid each quarter by Mr. Newbery; the publisher taking credit for

these payments in his literary settlements with Goldsmith. The first quarterly payment had become due on the 24th of March 1763; and on that day the landlady's claim of £12. 10s., made up to £14 by 'incidental expenses,' was discharged by Newbery. It stands as one item in an account of his cash advances for the first nine months of 1763, which characteristically exhibits the relations of bookwriter and bookseller. Mrs. Fleming's bills recur at their stated intervals; and on the 8th of September, there is a payment of £15 to William Filby the tailor. The highest advance in money is one (which is not repeated) of three guineas; the rest vary, with intervals of a week or so between each, from two guineas to one guinea and half a guinea. The whole amount is little more than £96; about £60 of which Goldsmith had meanwhile satisfied by 'copies of different kinds,' when on settlement day he gave his note for the balance.

What these 'copies' in every case were, it is not so easy to discover. From a list of books lent to him by Newbery, a compilation on popular philosophy appears to have been contemplated; he was certainly engaged in the revision of what was meant to be a humorous recommendation of female government entitled *Description of Millenium Hall*, as well as in making additions to four juvenile volumes of *Wonders of Nature and Art*; and he had more to do with another book, the *System of Natural History* by Dr. Brookes (the author of the *Gazetteer*), which he thoroughly revised, and to which he not



only contributed a graceful preface, but several introductions to the various sections, full of picturesque animation. He was to have received for this labour 'eleven guineas in full,' but it was increased to nearly thirty. He had also some share in the *Martial Review, or General History of the late War*, the profits of which Newbery had set apart for his luckless son-in-law, Kit Smart: and in a memorandum furnished by himself to the publisher, he claims three guineas for *Preface to Universal History* (a rival to the existing publication of that name, set on foot by Newbery and edited by Guthrie); two guineas for *Preface to Rhetoric*, and one for *Preface to Chronicle*, neither of these last now traceable; three guineas for *Critical and Monthly*, presumed to be contributions to Newbery's magazines; and twenty-one pounds on account of a *History of England*. A subsequent receipt acknowledges another twenty-one pounds 'which with what I received before, is in full 'for the copy of the *History of England* in a series of 'Letters, two volumes in 12mo.'

This book, which was not published till the following year, claims a word of description. Such of the labours of 1763 as had yet seen the light, were not of a kind to attract much notice. 'When we write anything,' said Goldsmith, 'I think the public make a point of not knowing anything about it.' So, remembering what Pope had said of the 'lucky lines' that had a lord to own them, the present book was issued, doubtless with Newbery's glad concurrence, as a *History of England in a series of*

*Letters from a Nobleman to his Son.* It had a great success in that character ; passed through many editions ; and was afterwards translated into French by the wife of Brissot, with notes by the Revolutionary leader himself. The nobleman was supposed to be Lord Chesterfield, so refined was the style ; Lord Orrery had also the credit of it ; but the persuasion at last became general that the author was Lord Lyttleton, and the name of that grave good lord (placed also, in consequence of its success in this instance, to a catchpenny Collection of Letters written by the author of *Doctor Syntax*) is still seen affixed to it on the bookstalls. The mistake was never corrected : it being the bookseller's interest to continue it, and not less the author's as well, when in his own name he subsequently went over the same ground. But it was not concealed from his friends ; copies of the second edition of the book were sent with his autograph to both Percy and Johnson ; and a zealous acquaintance, after his death, eagerly informed the *Gentleman's Magazine* not only that he had really written it in his lodgings at Islington, but how and in what way he did so. In the morning, says Mr. Urban's correspondent, he would study the period on which he was engaged, in Rapin, Carte, Kennett's Collection, and the recent volumes of Hume ; then, having made the notes he thought necessary, he would set forth on a country walk, all the more happily if a friend accompanied him ; and not till after his temperate dinner, on return, would he begin to write. If the friend stayed to partake, and

a 'cheerful evening' intercepted work, some hours were still 'seized from sleep,' to write as much as he had contemplated by the studies of the morning.

One may clearly trace these 'cheerful evenings,' I think, in Mrs. Fleming's 'incidental expenses.' The good lady was not loath to be generous at times, but is careful to give herself the full credit of it; and a frequent item in her bill is '*a gentleman's dinner, nothing.*' Four gentlemen have tea, for eighteen-pence; 'wines and cakes' are supplied for the same sum; bottles of port are charged two shillings each; and one 'Doctor Reman' is such a special favourite, that three elaborate cyphers (£0. 0s. 0d.) follow his teas as well as his dinners. Redmond was his real name. He was a young Irish physician who had lived some years in France, and was now disputing with the Society of Arts on some alleged discoveries in the properties of antimony. Among Mrs. Fleming's anonymous entries, however, were some that related to more distinguished visitors.

The greatest of these I would introduce as he was seen one day in the present year by a young and eager admirer, passing quickly through Cranbourne Alley. He might have been on his way to Goldsmith. He was a bustling, active, stout little man, dressed in a sky blue coat. His admirer saw him at a distance, turning the corner; and, running with all expedition to have a nearer view, came up with him in Castle Street, as he stood patting one of two quarrelling boys on the back, and, looking steadfastly

at the expression in the coward's face, was saying in very audible voice, 'Damn him, if I would take it of him! at him again!' Enemy or admirer could not better have seen William Hogarth. He might see, in that little incident, his interest in homely life, his preference of the real in art, and his quick apprehension of character; his love of hard hitting, and his indomitable English spirit. The admirer, who, at the close of his own chequered life, thus remembered and related it, was James Barry of Cork; who had followed Mr. Edmund Burke to London with letters from Doctor Sleigh, and whose birth, genius, and poverty soon made him known to Goldsmith.

Between Goldsmith and Hogarth were many reasons of sympathy. Few so sure as the great, self-taught, philosophic artist, to penetrate at once, through any outer husk of disadvantage, to discernment of an honest and loving soul. Genius in both took side with the homely and the poor; and they had personal foibles in common. No man can be supposed to have read the letters in the *Public Ledger* with heartier agreement than Hogarth; no man so little likely as Goldsmith to suffer a sky blue coat, or conceited, strutting, consequential airs, to weigh against the claims of the painter of *Marriage à-la-Mode*. How they first met has not been related, but they met frequently. In these last two years of Hogarth's life, admiration had become precious to him; and Goldsmith was ready with his tribute. Beside, there was Wilkes to rail against, and Churchill to condemn, as well as Johnson to praise and

love. 'I'll tell you what,' would Hogarth say: 'Sam Johnson's conversation is to the talk of other men like Titian's painting compared to Hudson's: but don't you tell people, now, that I say so; for the connoisseurs and I are at war, you know; and because I hate *them*, they think I hate Titian.'

Goldsmith and the connoisseurs were at war, too; and this would help to make more agreeable that frequent intercourse, of which Hogarth has himself left the only memorial. A portrait in oil, known by the name of 'Goldsmith's Hostess,' and so exhibited in London a few years back, is the work of his pencil. It involves no



great stretch of fancy to suppose it painted in the Islington lodgings, at some crisis of domestic pressure. Newbery's

accounts reveal to us how often it was needful to mitigate Mrs. Fleming's impatience, to moderate her wrath, and, when money was not immediately at hand, to minister to her vanities. For Newbery was a strict accountant, and kept sharply within the terms of his bargains; exacting notes of hand at each quarterly settlement for whatever the balance might be, and objecting to add to it by new payments when it happened to be large. It is but to imagine a visit from Hogarth at such time. If his good nature wanted any stimulus, the thought of Newbery would give it. He had himself an old grudge against the booksellers. He charges them in his autobiography with 'cruel treatment' of his father, and dilates on the bitterness they add to the necessity of earning bread by the pen. But, though the copyrights of his prints were a source of certain and not inconsiderable income, his money at command was scanty; and it would better suit his generous good humour, as well as better serve his friend, to bring his easel in his coach some day, and enthrone Mrs. Fleming by the side of it. So the portrait was painted; and much laughter there was in its progress, I do not doubt, at the very different sort of sitters and subjects, whose coronet-coaches were crowding the west side of Leicester Square.

The good humour of Reynolds was a different thing from that of Hogarth. It had no antagonism about it. Ill humour with any other part of the world had nothing to do with it. It was gracious and diffused; singling

out some, it might be, for special warmth, but smiling blandly upon all. He was eminently the gentleman of his time; and if there is a hidden charm in his portraits, it is that. His own nature pervades them, and shines out from them still. He was now forty years old, being younger than Hogarth by a quarter of a century; was already in the receipt of nearly six thousand pounds a year; and had known nothing but uninterrupted prosperity. He had moved from St. Martin's Lane into Newport Street, and from Newport Street into Leicester Square: he had raised his prices from five, ten, and twenty guineas (his earliest charge for the three sizes of portraits), successively to ten, twenty, and forty; to twelve, twenty-four, and forty-eight; to fifteen, thirty, and sixty; to twenty, forty, and eighty; and to twenty-five, fifty, and a hundred, the sums he now charged: he had lately built a gallery for his works: and he had set up a gay gilt coach, with the four seasons painted on its pannels. Yet, of those to whom the man was really known, it may be doubted if there was one who grudged him a good fortune, which was worn with generosity and grace, and justified by noble qualities; while few indeed should have been the exceptions, whether among those who knew or those who knew him not, to the feeling of pride that an Englishman had at last arisen, who could measure himself successfully with the Dutch and the Italian.

This was what Reynolds had striven for; and what common men might suppose to be his envy or self-suffi-

ciency. Not with any sense of triumph over living competitors, did he listen to the praise he loved; not of being better than Hogarth, or than Gainsborough, or than his old master Hudson, was he thinking continually, but of the glory of being one day placed by the side of Vandyke and of Rubens. Undoubtedly he must be said to have overrated the effects of education, study, and the practice of schools; and it is matter of much regret that he should never have thought of Hogarth but as a moral satirist and man of wit, or sought for his favourite art the dignity of a closer alliance with such philosophy and genius. But the difficult temper of Hogarth himself cannot be kept out of view. His very virtues had a stubbornness and a dogmatism that repelled. What Reynolds most desired, to bring men of their common calling together, and by consent and union, by study and co-operation, establish claims to respect and continuance, Hogarth had been all his life opposing; and was now, at the close of life, standing of his own free choice apart and alone. Study the great works of the great masters for ever, said Reynolds; there is only one school, cried Hogarth, and that is kept by Nature. What was uttered on the one side of Leicester Square, was pretty sure to be contradicted on the other; and neither would make the advance which might have reconciled the views of both. Be it remembered, at the same time, that Hogarth, in the daring confidence of his more astonishing genius, kept himself at the farthest extreme. 'Talk of sense, and study, and all



‘that,’ he said to Walpole, ‘why, it is owing to the good sense of the English that they have not painted better. The most ignorant people about painting are the painters themselves. There’s Reynolds, who certainly has genius; why but t’ other day he offered a hundred pounds for a picture that I would not hang in my cellar.’ Reynolds might have some excuse if he turned from this with a smile, and a supposed confirmation of his error that the critic was himself no painter. Thus these great men lived separate to the last. The only feeling they shared in common may have been that kindness to Oliver Goldsmith, which, after their respective fashion, each manifested well. The one, with his ready help and robust example, would have strengthened him for life, as for a solitary warfare which awaited every man of genius; the other, more gently, would have drawn him from contests and solitude, from discontents and low esteem, to the sense that worldly consideration and social respect might gladden even literary toil. While Hogarth was propitiating and painting Mrs. Fleming, Reynolds was founding the Literary Club.

It did not receive that name till many years later: but that Reynolds was its Romulus, and this the year of its foundation, is unquestionable; though the meetings did not begin till winter. Johnson caught at the notion eagerly; suggested as its model a club he had himself founded in Ivy Lane some fourteen years before, and which the deaths or dispersion of its members had now

interrupted for nearly seven years; and on this suggestion being adopted, the members, as in the earlier club, were limited to nine, and Mr. Hawkins, as an original member of the Ivy Lane, was invited to join. Topham Beauclerc and Bennet Langton were asked and welcomed earnestly; and, of course, Mr. Edmund Burke. He had lately left Dublin and politics for a time, and returned to literature in Queen Anne Street; where a solid mark of his patron's satisfaction had accompanied him, in a pension on the Irish Establishment of £300 a year. Perhaps it was ominous of the mischances of this pension, that it was entered in the name of 'William Birt:' the name which was soon to be so famous, having little familiarity or fame as yet. The notion of the Club delighted Burke; and he asked admission for his father-in-law Doctor Nugent, an accomplished Roman Catholic physician, who lived with him. Beauclerc in like manner suggested his friend Chamier, then under-secretary at war. Oliver Goldsmith completed the number. But another member of the original Ivy Lane, Samuel Dyer, making unexpected appearance from abroad in the following year, was joyfully admitted; and though it was resolved to make election difficult, and only for special reasons permit addition to their number, the limitation at first proposed was thus of course done away with. Twenty was the highest number reached during Goldsmith's life; and this in the course of ten years. The place of meeting was the Turk's Head tavern in Gerrard Street

Soho, where, the chair being taking every Monday night at seven o'clock by a member in rotation, all were expected to attend and sup together. In the ninth year of their existence, they changed their day of meeting to Friday; and in place of their weekly supper, resolved to dine together once a fortnight during the meeting of parliament. Each member present was to bear his share of the reckoning; and conversation, from which politics only were excluded, was kept up always to a late hour.

So originated and was formed that famous Club, which had made itself a name in literary history long before it received, at Garrick's funeral, the name of the Literary Club by which it is now known. Its meetings were noised abroad; the fame of its conversations received eager addition from the difficulty of obtaining admission to it; and it came to be as generally understood that Literature had fixed her social head-quarters here, as that Politics reigned supreme at Wildman's or the Cocoa Tree. With advantage, let me add, to the dignity and worldly consideration of men of letters themselves. 'I believe 'Mr. Fox will allow me to say,' remarked the Bishop of Asaph, when the society was not more than fifteen years old, 'that the honour of being elected into the Turk's 'Head Club is not inferior to that of being the representative of Westminster or Surrey.' The bishop had just been elected; but into such lusty independance had the Club sprung up thus early, that bishops, even Lords Chancellors, were known to have knocked for admission

unsuccessfully; and on the night of St. Asaph's election, Lord Camden and the Bishop of Chester were blackballed. Shall we wonder if distinction in a society such as this, should open a new life to Goldsmith?

His claim to enter it would seem to have been somewhat canvassed, at first, by one of the members. 'As he wrote for the booksellers,' says Hawkins, 'we at the Club looked on him as a mere literary drudge, equal to the task of compiling and translating, but little capable of original, and still less of poetical composition: he had, nevertheless, unknown to us' . . . I need not anticipate what it was that so startled Hawkins with its unknown progress: the reader has already intimation of it. It is, however, more than probable, whatever may have been thought of Goldsmith's drudgery, that this extremely low estimate of his capacity was limited to Mr. Hawkins, whose opinions were seldom popular with the other members of the Club. Early associations clung hard to Johnson, and, for the sake of these, Hawkins was borne with to the last; but in the newly-formed society, even Johnson admitted him to be out of place. Neither in habits nor opinions did he harmonise with the rest. He had been an attorney for many years, affecting literary tastes, and dabbling in music at the Madrigal Club; but, four years before the present, so large a fortune had fallen to him in right of his wife, that he withdrew from the law, and lived and judged with severe propriety as a Middlesex magistrate. Within two years he will be

elected Chairman of the Sessions; in seven years more will be made a knight; and in four years after that, will deliver himself of five quarto volumes of a history of music, in the slow and laborious conception of which he is already painfully engaged. Altogether, his existence was a kind of pompous, parsimonious, insignificant drawl, cleverly ridiculed by one of the wits in an absurd epitaph: 'Here lies Sir John Hawkins, Without his shoes and 'stauckins.' One of his favourite themes was the improvidence of what he called sentimental writers, at the head of whom he placed the author of *Tom Jones*; a book which he charged with having 'corrupted the rising generation, and sapped the foundation of that morality which it is the duty of parents and all public instructors to inculcate in the minds of young people.' This was his common style of talk. Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne, he looked upon as 'stuff;' and for the three last, as men 'whose *necessities* and abilities were nearly commensurate,' he had a special contempt. As Chairman of Quarter Sessions, what other judgment could he be expected to have of them? Being men of loose principles, he would say, bad economists, and living without foresight, 'it is their endeavour to commute for their failings by professions of greater love to mankind, more tender affections, and finer feelings, than they will allow men of more regular lives, whom they deem formalists, to possess.' With a man of such regular life, denouncing woe to loose characters that should endeavour to commute

their failings, poor Goldsmith had naturally little chance ; and it fared as ill with the rest of the Club when questions of 'economy' or 'foresight' came up. Mr. Hawkins, after the first four meetings, begged to be excused his share of the reckoning, on the ground that he did not partake of the supper. 'And was he excused?' asked Doctor Burney, when Johnson told him of the incident many years after. 'Oh yes,' was the reply ; 'for no man is angry at another 'for being inferior to himself. We all scorned him, and 'admitted his plea. Yet I really believe him,' pursued Johnson, characteristically, 'to be an honest man at the 'bottom ; though to be sure he is penurious, and he is 'mean, and it must be owned he has a tendency to savageness.' It was this latter tendency which caused his early secession from the Club. He was not a member for more than two or three years. His own account is that he withdrew because its late hours were inconsistent with his domestic arrangements : but the fact was, says Boswell, that he one evening attacked Mr. Burke in so rude a manner, that all the company testified their displeasure ; and at their next meeting his reception was such that he never came again.

Letitia Matilda Hawkins herself, proposing to defend her father, corroborates this statement. '*The Burkes,*' she says, describing the impressions of her childhood, 'as 'the men of that family were called, were not then what 'they were afterwards considered ; they were, as my 'father termed them, *Irish Adventurers* ; and came into

‘this country with no good auguries, nor any very decided principles of action. They had to talk their way in the world that was to furnish their means of living.’

An Irish adventurer who had to talk his way in the world, is much what Burke was considered by the great as well as little vulgar, for several more years to come. He was now thirty-three; and till the present year had derived his only help from the booksellers, for whom he had some time written, and continued to write, the historical portion of the *Annual Register*. He had been but a few months in enjoyment of Hamilton’s pension, and was already extremely uneasy as to the conditions on which he began to suspect it had been granted. His patron does not seem to have relished his proposed return to London society. ‘Your business ought on all occasions to have the preference, I know,’ wrote Burke, in deprecation; ‘to be the first, and the last, and indeed in all respects the main concern. All I contend for is, that I may not be considered as absolutely excluded from all other thoughts, in their proper time and due subordination.’ The whole truth was not made obvious to him till two years later. He then found (and on finding it flung up the pension) that Hamilton thought him placed by it in ‘a sort of domestic situation.’ It was the consideration of a bargain and sale of independence. It was a claim for absolute servitude. ‘Not to value myself as a gentleman,’ remonstrated Burke, ‘a freeman, a man of education, and one pretending to literature, is there any situation in

' life so low, that can subject a man to the possibility of such an engagement? Would you dare attempt to bind your footman to such terms?' Mr. Hawkins, it is clear, would have thought the terms suitable enough to the situation in life of an Irish adventurer; and the incident may illustrate his vulgar and insolent phrase.

Let it always be remembered, when Burke's vehemence of will and sharp impetuosity of temper are remembered. These were less his natural defects, than his painful sense of what he wanted in the eyes of others. When, in later years, he proudly reviewed those exertions which had been the soul of the revived Whig party, which had re-established their strength, consolidated their power and influence, and been rewarded with insignificant office and uniform exclusion from the Cabinet, he had to reflect that at every step in the progress of his life he had been traversed and opposed, and forced to make every inch of his way in the teeth of prejudice and dislike. 'The narrowness of his fortune,' says Walpole, 'kept him down.' At every turnpike he met, he had been called on to show his passport; otherwise no admission, no toleration for him. Improved by this, his manners could hardly be: the more other spheres of consideration were closed to him, the more would he be driven to dominate in his own: and I have little doubt that he somewhat painfully at times, in the first few years of the Club, impressed others as well as Hawkins with a sense of his predominance. He had to 'talk his way in the world that was to furnish his means of living,'



and this was the only theatre open to him yet. Here only could he as yet pour forth, to an audience worth exciting, the stores of argument and eloquence he was thirsting to employ upon a wider stage; the variety of knowledge, the fund of astonishing imagery, the ease of philosophic illustration, the overpowering copiousness of words, in which he has never had a rival. A civil guest, says Herbert, will no more talk all, than eat all, the feast; and perhaps this might be forgotten now and then. 'I am convinced,' says Miss Hawkins, 'my father *was* disgusted with the 'overpowering deportment of Burke, and his monopoly of 'the conversation, which made all the other members, 'excepting his antagonist Johnson, merely his auditors.' Something of the same sort is said by that antagonist, though in a more generous way. 'What I most envy 'Burke for,' said Johnson, 'is, that he is never what we call 'hum-drum; never unwilling to begin to talk, nor in 'haste to leave off. Take up whatever topic you please, 'he is ready to meet you. I cannot say he is good at 'listening. So desirous is he to talk, that if one is speak- 'ing at this end of the table, he'll speak to somebody at 'the other end. But Burke, sir, is such a man, that if 'you met him for the first time in the street, where you 'were stopped by a drove of oxen, and you and he stepped 'aside to take shelter but for five minutes, he'd talk to 'you in such a manner, that, when you parted, you would 'say, this is an extraordinary man. Now you may be long 'enough with me, without finding anything extraordinary.'

This was modest in Johnson, but there was more truth than he perhaps intended in it. In general, Burke's views were certainly the subtler and more able. He penetrated deeper into the principles of things, below common life and what is called good sense, than Johnson could. 'Is he 'like Burke,' asked Goldsmith, when some one seemed to exalt Johnson's talk too highly, 'who winds into a 'subject like a serpent?' On the other hand, there was a strength and clearness in Johnson's conversational expression which was all his own, and which originated Percy's likening of it, as contrasted with ordinary conversation, to an antique statue with every vein and muscle distinct and bold, by the side of an inferior cast. He had, beside, wit, often an incomparable humour, and a hundred other interesting qualities, which Burke had not; while his rough dictatorial manner, his loud voice, and slow deliberate utterance, so much oftener suggested an objection than gave help to what he said, that one may doubt the truth of Lord Pembroke's pleasantry to Boswell, that 'his sayings would not appear so extraordinary but for 'his bow-wow way.' Of the ordinary listener, at any rate, the bow-wow way exacted something too much; and was quite as likely to stun as to strike him. 'He's a tremendous companion,' said poor George Garrick, when urged to confess of him what he really thought. He brought, into common talk, too plain an anticipation of victory and triumph. He wore his determination not to be thrown or beaten, whatever side he might please to take,

somewhat defiantly upon his sleeve ; and startled peaceful society a little too much with his uncle Andrew's habits in the ring at Smithfield. It was a sense, on his own part, of this eagerness to make every subject a battle ground, which made him say, at a moment of illness and exhaustion, that if he were to see Burke then, it would kill him. From the first day of their meeting, now some years ago, at Garrick's dinner table, his desire had been to measure himself, on all occasions, with Burke. 'I suppose, 'Murphy,' he said to Arthur, as they came away from the dinner, 'you are proud of your countryman. *Cum talis sit utinam noster esset.*' The Club was an opportunity for both, and promptly seized ; to the occasional overshadowing, no doubt, of the comforts and opportunities of other members. Yet, for the most part, their wit-combats seem not only to have interested the rest, but to have improved the temper of the combatants, and made them more generous to each other. 'How very great Johnson 'has been to-night,' said Burke to Langton, as they left the Club together. Langton assented, but could have wished to hear more from another person. 'Oh, no !' replied Burke, 'it is enough for me to have rung the bell to him.'

Bennet Langton was, in his own person, an eminent example of the high and humane class who are content to ring the bell to their friends. Admiration of the *Rambler* made him seek admittance to its author, when he was himself, some eight years back, but a lad of eighteen ; and his ingenuous manners and mild enthusiasm at once

won Johnson's love. That he represented a great Lincolnshire family, still living at their ancient seat of Langton, had not abridged his merits in the philosopher's regard; and when he went up to Trinity College Oxford, Johnson took occasion to visit him there; and there made the acquaintance of his college chum, and junior by two years, Topham Beauclerc, grandson of the first Duke of St. Albans. These two young men had several qualities in common; ready intellect, perfect manners, great love of literature, and a thorough admiration of Johnson; but, with these, such striking points of difference, that Johnson could not comprehend their intimacy when first he saw them together. It was not till he discovered what a scorn of fools Beauclerc blended with his love of folly; what virtues of the mind he set off against his vices of the body, and with how much gaiety and wit he carried off his licentiousness; that he became as fond of the laughing rake as of his quiet contemplative companion. 'I shall have my old friend to bail out of the round house,' exclaimed Garrick, when he heard of it; and of an incident in connexion with it, that occurred in the next Oxford vacation. His old friend had turned out of his chambers, at three o'clock in the morning, to have a 'frisk' with the young 'dogs;' had gone to a tavern in Covent Garden, and roared out Lord Lansdowne's drinking song over a bowl of bishop; had taken a boat with them and rowed to Billingsgate; and (according to Boswell) had resolved, with Beauclerc, 'to persevere in dissipation for the rest of

‘the day,’ when Langton pleaded an engagement to breakfast with some young ladies, and was scolded by the sage for leaving social friends to go and sit with a set of wretched *un-idea’d* girls. It was on hearing of similar proposed extravagances, soon after, that Beauclerc’s mother angrily rebuked Johnson himself, and told him an old man should not put such things in young people’s heads; but the frisking philosopher had as little respect for Lady Sydney’s anger as for Garrick’s decorous alarm. ‘She had no notion of a joke, sir,’ he said; ‘she had come late into life, and had a mighty unpliant under-standing. And as for Garrick, sir, he durst not do such a thing. His wife would not *let* him!’

The taste for *un-idea’d girls* was not laughed out of Langton, nevertheless; and to none did his gentle domesticities become dearer than to Johnson. He left Oxford with a first-rate knowledge of Greek, and, what is of rarer growth at Oxford, untiring and all-embracing tolerance. His manners endeared him to men from whom he differed most; he listened even better than he talked; and there is no figure at this memorable Club more pleasing, none that takes kinder or vivider shape in the fancy, than Bennet Langton’s. He was six feet six inches high, very meagre, stooped very much, pulled out a snuff-box whenever he began to talk, and had a habit of sitting with one leg twisted round the other, as if fearing to occupy more space than was equitable. Beauclerc said he was like the stork standing on one leg, in Raffaele’s

cartoon ; but goodnaturedly ; for the still surviving affection of their college-days checked even Beauclerc's propensity to satire, and as freely still, as in those college-days, Johnson frisked and philosophised with his *Lanky* and his *Beau*. The man of fashion had changed as little as the easy kindly scholar. Alternating, as in his Oxford career, pleasure and literature, the tavern and the court, books and the gaming table, he had but widened the scene of his wit and folly, his reasoning and merriment, his polished manners and well-bred contempt, his acuteness and maliciousness. Between the men of letters at the Turk's Head, and the glittering loungers in St. James's Street, he was the solitary link of connexion ; and with George Selwyn at White's, or at Strawberry Hill with Walpole, was as much at home as with Johnson in Gerrard Street. It gave him an influence, a sort of secret charm, among these lettered companions, which Johnson himself very frankly confessed to. 'Beauclerc could take more liberty 'with him,' says Boswell, 'than anybody with whom I 'ever saw him ;' and when his friends were studying stately congratulations on his pension, and Beau simply hoped, with *Falstaff*, that he'd in future purge and live cleanly like a gentleman, he laughed at the advice and took it. Such, indeed, was the effect upon him of that kind of accomplishment in which he felt himself deficient, that he more than once instanced Beauclerc's talents as those which he was more disposed to envy than those of any whom he had known.

A peculiarity in Beauclerc's conversation seems, undoubtedly and half unconsciously, to have impressed every one. Boswell tries to describe it by assigning to it 'that *air of the world* which has I know not what impressive effect, as if there were something more than is expressed, or than perhaps we could perfectly understand.' It might more briefly have been defined, I imagine, as the feeling of a superiority to his subject. No man was ever so free, when he was going to say a good thing, from a look which expressed that it was coming; or, when he had said it, from a look that expressed that it had come. This was a sense of the same superiority; and it gave Beauclerc a predominance of a certain sort over his company, little likely to be always pleasant, and least so when it pointed shafts of sarcasm against his friends. Even Johnson was not tolerant of these. 'Sir,' he said to him, after one of his malicious sallies, 'you never open your mouth but with intention to give pain; and you have often given me pain, not from the power of what you said, but from seeing your intention.' No one suffered from the evil habit so much as Goldsmith.

His position in the Club will be better understood, from this sketch of its leading members. He found himself, of course, at a great disadvantage. The leading traits of character which this narrative has exhibited, here, for the most part, told against him. If, on entering it, his rank and claims in letters had been better ascertained, more allowance would have then been made, not alone by the

Hawkinses, but by the Beauclercs and Burkes, for awkwardness of manners and ungainliness of aspect, for that ready credulity which is said to be the only disadvantage of an honest man, for a simplicity of nature that should have disarmed instead of inviting ridicule, and for the too sensitive spirit which small annoyances overthrew. Those who have no other means of acquiring respect than by insisting on it, will commonly succeed ; but he had too many of those other means unrecognised, and was too constantly contending for them, to have energy to spare for that simpler method. If he could only have arrived, where Steele was brought by the witty yet gentle ridicule of Estcourt, at the happiness of thinking nothing a diminution to him but what argued a depravity of his will, then might anything Beauclerc or Hawkins could have said, of his shape, his air, his manner, his speech, or his address, have but led to a manly enforcement of more real claims. But there was nothing in this respect too trifling for him not to think a diminution, exacting effort and failure anew. It was now he called William Filby to his aid, and appeared in finery which made plainer the defects it was meant to hide. It was now he resented non-acceptance of himself by affecting careless judgments of others. It was now that his very avarice of social pleasure made him fretful of the restraints of Gerrard Street ; and all he had suffered or enjoyed of old, in the college class room, at the inn of Ballymahon, among the Axe Lane beggars, or in the garret of Griffiths, reacted on his cordial



but fitful nature. Not to spoil, but often to obscure it. Too little self-confidence begets the forms of vanity, and self-love will exaggerate faults as well as virtues. If Goldsmith had been more thoroughly assured of his own fine genius, the slow social recognition of it would have made him less uneasy : but he was thrust suddenly into this society, with little beyond a vague sense of other claims than it was disposed to concede to him, however little it might sympathise with the special contempts of Hawkins ; and what argued a doubt in others, seems to have become one to himself, which he took as doubtful means of reinforcing. If they could talk, why so could he ; but unhappily he did not talk, as in festive evenings at Islington or the White Conduit, to please himself, but to force others to be pleased. Tom Davies was no very acute observer ; yet even he has noted of him, that, so far from desiring to appear to the best advantage, he took more pains to be esteemed worse than he was, than others do to appear better than they are : which was but saying, awkwardly enough, that he failed to make himself understood. How time will modify all this ; how far the acquisition of his fame, and its effects upon himself, will strengthen, with respect, the love which even they who most laughed at, already bore him ; and in how much this laughing *habit* will nevertheless still beset his friends, surviving its excuses and occasion ; the course of this narrative must show. That his future would more than redeem his past, Johnson was the first to maintain ; for his own experience

of hardship had helped his affection to discern it, and he was never, at any period of their intercourse, so forbearing as at this. Goldsmith's position in these days should nevertheless be well understood, if we would read aright the ampler chronicle which later years obtained.

He who was to be the chronicler had arrived again in London. 'Look, my lord!' exclaimed Tom Davies, with the voice and attitude of Horatio, addressing a young gentleman who was sitting at tea with himself and Mrs. Davies, in their little back parlour, on the evening of Monday the 16th of May, and pointing to an uncouth figure advancing to the glass door by which the parlour opened to the shop, '*It comes!*' The hope of the young gentleman's life was at last arrived. 'Don't tell where I come from,' he whispered, as Johnson entered. 'This is Mr. Boswell, sir,' said Davies. Adding waggishly, 'from Scotland, sir!' 'Mr. Johnson,' said poor Boswell in a flutter; for the town was now ringing with *Number Forty-five*, Bute had just retired before the anti-Scottish storm, and Johnson's antipathies were notorious; 'I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it.' 'That, sir, I find,' said the remorseless wit, 'is what a very great many of your countrymen cannot help. Now,' he added, turning to Davies as he sat down, regardless of the stunned young gentleman, 'what do you think of Garrick? He has refused me an order to the play for Miss Williams, because he knows the house will be full, and that an order would be worth three shillings.' Boswell roused himself

at this, for what he thought would be a flattering thing. He knew that Garrick had, but a few years before, assisted this very Miss Williams by a free benefit at his theatre; but he did not yet know how little Johnson meant by such a sally, or that he claimed to himself a kind of exclusive property in Garrick, for abuse as well as praise. 'O, sir!' he exclaimed, 'I cannot think Mr. Garrick would grudge such a trifle to *you*.' 'Sir!' rejoined the other, with a look and tone that shut up his luckless admirer for the rest of the evening, 'I have known David Garrick longer than you have done; and I know no right you have to talk to me on the subject.' A characteristic commencement of a friendship very interesting to all men. The self-complacent young Scot could hardly have opened it better, than by showing how much his coolness and self-complacency could bear. He rallied from the shock; and, though he did not open his mouth again, very widely opened his ears, and shewed eagerness and admiration unabated.

'Don't be uneasy,' said Davies, following him to the door as he went away. 'I can see he likes you very well.' So emboldened, the 'giant's den' itself was daringly invaded after a few days; and the giant, among other unusual ways of shewing his benevolence, took to praising Garrick this time. After that, might the fat little pompous figure now eager to make itself the giant's shadow, be seen commonly on the wait for him at his various haunts: in ordinaries at the social dinner hour, or by Temple Bar in

the jovial midnight watches (Johnson's present habit, as he tells us himself, was to leave his chambers at four in the afternoon, and seldom to return till two in the morning), to tempt him to the Mitre. They supped at that tavern for the first time on the 25th of June; but Boswell, who tells us what passed, has failed to tell us at what dish it was of their 'good supper,' or at what glass of the 'two bottles of port' they disposed of, that Johnson suddenly roared across the table, 'Give me your hand; I 'have taken a liking to you.' They talked of Goldsmith. He was a somewhat uneasy subject to Boswell, who could not comprehend how he had managed to become so great a favourite with so great a man. For he had published absolutely nothing with his name (Boswell himself had just published '*Newmarket, a Tale*'); you never heard of him yet, but as 'one Dr. Goldsmith'; and all who knew him seemed to know that he had passed a very loose, odd, scrambling kind of life. 'Sir,' said Johnson, 'Goldsmith 'is one of the first men we now have as an author, and he 'is a very worthy man too. He *has* been loose in his 'principles, but he is coming right.'

A first supper so successful would of course be soon repeated, but few could have guessed how often. They supped again at the Mitre on the 1st of July; they were together in Inner Temple Lane on the 5th; they supped a third time at the Mitre on the 6th; they met once more on the 9th; the Mitre again received them on the 14th; on the 19th they were talking again; they supped

at Boswell's chambers on the 20th ; they passed the 21st together, and supped at the Turk's Head in the Strand ; they were discussing the weather and other themes on the 26th ; they had another supper at the Turk's Head on the 28th, and were walking from it, arm in arm down the Strand, when Johnson gently put aside the enticing solicitations of wretchedness with *No, no, my Girl, it won't do* ; they sculled down to Greenwich, read verses on the river, and closed the day once more with supper at the Turk's Head, on the 30th ; on the 31st they again saw each other ; they took tea together, after a morning in Boswell's rooms, on the 2nd of August ; on the 3rd they had their last supper at the Turk's Head (Johnson encouraged the house because the mistress of it was a good civil woman, and had not much business) before Boswell's reluctant departure for Utrecht, where the old judge laird was sending him to study the law ; and so many of Johnson's sympathies had thus early been awakened by the untiring social enjoyment, the eagerness for talk, the unbounded reverence for himself, exhibited by Boswell, strengthened doubtless by his youth and idleness (of themselves enough, to him, to make any man acceptable), by his condition in life, by a sort of romance in the Lairdship of Auchinleck which he was one day to inherit, and not a little, it may be, by even his jabbering conceits and inexpressible absurdities, that on the 5th of August, the sage took a place beside him in the Harwich coach, accompanied him to the port he was to sail from, and as

they parted on the beach enjoined him to keep a journal, and promised himself to write to him. 'Who is this 'Scotch cur at Johnson's heels?' asked some one, amazed at the sudden intimacy. 'He is not a cur,' answered Goldsmith. 'You are too severe. He is only a bur. 'Tom Davies flung him at Johnson in sport, and he has 'the faculty of sticking.'

Boswell has retorted this respectful contempt; and in him it is excessively ludicrous. 'It has been generally 'circulated and believed,' he says, 'that the Doctor was a 'mere fool in conversation; but in truth this has been 'greatly exaggerated.' Goldsmith had supped with them at the Mitre on the 1st of July, and flung a paradox at both their heads. He maintained that knowledge was not desirable on its own account, for it often was a source of unhappiness. He supped with them again at the Mitre five days later, as Boswell's guest; and again was paradoxical. He disputed very warmly with Johnson, it seems, against the sacred maxim of the British Constitution, that the king can do no wrong: affirming his belief that what was morally false could not be politically true; and as the king might, in the exercise of his regal power, command and cause the doing of what was wrong, it certainly might be said, in sense and in reason, that he could do wrong: which appeared to Boswell sensible or reasonable proof of nothing but the speaker's vanity, and eager desire to be conspicuous wherever he was. 'As usual, he endeavoured, 'with too much eagerness, to shine.' It is added, indeed,

that his respectful attachment to Johnson was now at its height; but no better reason is given for it, than that his own literary reputation had not yet distinguished him so much 'as to excite a vain desire of competition with his 'great master.' In short it is impossible not to perceive that Boswell is impatient of Goldsmith from the first hour of their acquaintance. He finds his person short, his countenance coarse and vulgar, and his deportment that of a scholar awkwardly affecting the easy gentleman. How such a man could be thought by Johnson one of the first men of letters of the day, was hard to be understood; harder yet to be borne, that such a man should be a privileged man. 'Doctor Goldsmith being a privileged man, went with him this night' (the first supper at the Mitre) 'strutting away, and calling to me with an air of



'superiority, like that of an esoteric over an exoteric disciple of a sage of antiquity, *I go to Miss Williams.*'

To be allowed to go to Miss Williams was decisive of Johnson's favour. She was one of his pensioners, blind and old; was now living in a lodging in Bolt Court, provided by him till he had a room in a house to offer her, as in former days; was familiar with his earlier life

and its privations, was always making and drinking tea, knew intimately all his ways, and talked well; and he never went home at night, however late, supperless or after supper, without calling to have tea with Miss Williams. 'Why *do* you keep that old blind woman in your house?' asked Beauclerc. 'Why, sir,' answered Johnson, 'she was 'a friend to my poor wife, and was in the house with her 'when she died. She has remained in it ever since, sir.'

Beauclerc's friendships with women were not of the kind to help his appreciation of such gallantry as this; though he seems to have known none, in even the circles of fashion, so distinguished, that he did not take a pride in showing them his rusty-coated philosopher-friend. The then reader of the Temple, Mr. Maxwell, has described the levees at Inner Temple Lane. He seldom called at twelve o'clock in the day, he says, without finding Johnson in bed, or declaiming over his tea to a party of morning visitors, chiefly men of letters, among whom Goldsmith, Murphy, Hawkesworth (an old friend and fellow-worker under Cave), and Langton, are named as least often absent. Sometimes learned ladies were there, too; and particularly did he remember a French lady of wit and fashion doing him the honour of a visit. It was in the summer of this year; and the lady was no other than the famous Countess de Boufflers, acknowledged leader of French society, mistress of the Prince of Conti, aspiring to be his wife, and of course, in the then universal fashion of the *sçavantes*, *philosophes*, and *beaux esprits* of Paris,



an *Anglomane*. She had even written a tragedy in English prose, on a subject from the *Spectator*; and was now on a round of visitings, reading her tragedy, breakfasting with Walpole, dining with the Duke of Grafton, supping at Beauclerc's, out of patience with every body's ridiculous abuse of every body that meddled in politics, and out of breath with her own social exertions. 'Dans ce pays-ci,' she exclaimed, 'c'est un effort perpétuel pour se divertir;' and, exhausted with it herself, did not seem to think that any one else succeeded any better. It was a few days after Horace Walpole's great breakfast at Strawberry, where he describes her with her eyes a foot deep in her head, her hands dangling and scarce able to support her knitting-bag, that Beauclerc took her to see Johnson. They sat and talked with him some time; and were retracing their way up Inner Temple Lane to the carriage, when all at once they heard a voice like thunder, and became conscious of Johnson hurrying after them. On nothing priding himself more than his politeness, he had taken it into his head, on a little reflection, that he ought to have done the honours of his literary residence to a foreign lady of quality; and, eager to show himself a man of gallantry, was now hurrying down the staircase in violent agitation. He overtook them before they reached the Temple Gate, and brushing in between Beauclerc and the Countess, seized her hand and conducted her to her coach. His dress was a rusty brown morning suit, a pair of old shoes by way of slippers, a little shrivelled wig sticking on the top of his head, and the sleeves of his

shirt and the knees of his breeches hanging loose. 'A considerable crowd of people gathered round,' says Beauclerc, 'and were not a little struck by this singular appearance.' The hero of the incident would be the last person to be moved by it. The more the state of his toilet dawned upon him, the less likely would he be to notice it. There was no more remarkable trait in Johnson, and certainly none in which he more contrasted with the subject of this narrative, than that no external circumstances ever prompted him to make the least apology for them, or to seem even sensible of their existence.

It was not many months after this that he went to see Goldsmith in a new lodging he had taken on the then library stair-case of the Temple. They were a humble set of chambers enough; one Jeffs, the butler of the society, sharing them with him; and on Johnson's prying and peering about after his short-sighted fashion, flattening his face against every object he looked at, Goldsmith's uneasy sense of their deficiencies broke out. 'I shall soon be in better chambers, sir, than these,' he said. 'Nay, sir,' answered Johnson, 'never mind that. *Nil te quesiveris extra.*' Invaluable advice! could Goldsmith, blotting out remembrance of his childhood and youth, and looking solely and steadily on the present and the future, but have dared to act upon it.

The removal to this lodging from that of Newbery's relative in Wine-Office Court took place in an early month of 1764, and seems to connect itself with circumstances at

the close of 1763 which indicate a less cordial understanding between himself and Newbery. He had ceased writing for the *British Magazine*; was contemplating an extensive engagement with James Dodsley; and had attempted to open a connection with Tonson of the Strand. The engagement with Dodsley went as far as a formal signed agreement (for a *Chronological History of the Lives of eminent Persons of Great Britain and Ireland*), in which the title of Medical Bachelor is first assumed by him; and at the close of which another intimation of his growing importance appears, in the stipulation that 'Oliver Goldsmith shall print his name to the said work.' It was to be in two volumes, octavo, of the size and type of the *Universal History*; each volume was to contain thirty-five sheets; Goldsmith was to be paid at the rate of three guineas a sheet; and the whole was to be delivered in the space of two years at farthest. But nothing came of it. Dodsley had inserted a cautious proviso that he was not to be required to advance anything till the book should be completed; and hence, in all probability, the book was never begun. The overture to Tonson had not even so much success. It was a proposition from Goldsmith for a new edition of Pope, which Tonson was so little disposed to entertain that he did not condescend to write his refusal. He sent a printer with a message declining it; delivered with so much insolence, that the messenger received a caning for his pains.

The desire to connect himself with Pope, seems to point

in the direction of those secret labours which are to prove such wonderment to Hawkins. He was busy at this time with his poem and his novel; and, if there be any truth in what great fat Doctor Cheyne of Bath told Thomson, that, as you put a bird's eyes out to make it sing the sweeter, you should keep poets poor to animate their genius, he was in excellent condition for such labour; though it may be, with Thomson, he might think both the birds and the poets happier in the light, and singing sweetest amid luxuriant woods, with the full spring blossoming around them. What alone seems certain as to that matter, be it light or dark, is that the song, if a true song, will make itself audible.

There is a note among Newbery's papers with the date of the 17th of December, 1763, which states Goldsmith to have received twenty-five guineas from the publisher, for which he promises to account. At this time, too, he disappears from his usual haunts; and is supposed to have been in concealment somewhere. Certainly he was in distress, and on a less secure footing with Newbery than at the commencement of the year. Yet it is also at this time we find him busied with others' distresses, and helping to relieve them. Among his own papers at his death was found the copy of an appeal to the public for poor Kit Smart, who had married Newbery's step-daughter ten years before, and had since, with his eccentricities and imprudences, wearied out all his friends but Goldsmith and Johnson. Lately, as a last resource, he had been

taken to a mad-house ; and it was under this restraint, while pens and ink were denied to him, that he indented on the walls of his cell with a key, his *Song to David*. His friends accounted for the excellence of the composition by asserting that he was most religious when most mad ; but Goldsmith and Johnson were nevertheless now exerting themselves for his release. ‘Sir,’ said the latter to Boswell, at one of their recent interviews, ‘my poor friend Smart ‘falls upon his knees and says his prayers in the street, ‘and insists on people praying with him ; and what of ‘that? I’d as lief pray with Kit Smart as any one else. ‘Rationally speaking, sir, it is greater madness not to ‘pray at all than to pray as Smart did. Another charge ‘is that he does not love clean linen ; and, sir, I have no ‘passion for it.’

Their exertions were successful. Smart was again at large at the close of the year, and on the 3rd of the following April (1764) a sacred composition named *Hannah*, with his name as its author, and music by Mr. Worgan, was produced at the king’s theatre. The effort connects itself with a similar one by Goldsmith, made at the same time. He wrote the words of an Oratorio in three acts, on the subject of the Captivity in Babylon. But it is easier to help a friend than oneself ; and his own Oratorio lay unrepresented in his desk. All of it that escaped to the public while he lived were two songs ; in which his own sorrows and hope seemed as legibly written as those of the Israelitish women.

“ To the last moment of his breath,  
On Hope the wretch relies ;  
And e'en the pang preceding death  
Bids expectation rise.

Hope, like the glimmering taper's light,  
Adorns and cheers our way ;  
And still as darker grows the night,  
Emits a brighter ray.”

The night was very dark round Goldsmith just now, yet the ray was shining steadily too. In few of the years of his life have we more decisive evidence of struggles and distress ; in none did he accomplish so much for an enduring fame. But it is a year very difficult to describe with any accuracy of detail. We have little to guide us beyond the occasional memoranda of publishers and the accounts of Mrs. Elizabeth Fleming. To the Islington lodging he returned at the beginning of April (having paid ‘rent’ for the retention of ‘the room,’ meanwhile, at the rate of about three shillings a week) ; and his expenses to the end of June are contained in his landlady’s bill. They seem to argue fewer enjoyments, and less credit with Mrs. Fleming. No dinners or teas are thrown into the bargain. The ‘sixpence’ for ‘sassafras’ (a humble decoction which the poet does not seem to have despised, now dealt in by apothecaries chiefly) is always carefully charged. The loans are only four, and of moderate amount ; a shilling to ‘pay the laundress,’ and ten-pence, one and two-pence, and sixpence, ‘in cash.’ There are none of the old entries for port wine. Two-pence, twice, for ‘a pint of ale,’ and two-pence for ‘opodeldock,’

express his very humble 'extras.' The impression left by this bill is borne out by Newbery's concurrent memoranda of money advanced; in sums ridiculously small, and for such work as the revision of short translations, and papers for the *Christian Magazine*. What were not unusual in the previous year, as cash advances of one, two, and even four and five guineas, from the publisher, have now dwindled down to 'shillings' and 'half-crowns;' and it is matter of doubt whether Newbery, to satisfy outstanding claims, did not engage him for some part of his time in work for his juvenile library. The author of *Caleb Williams*, who had been a child's publisher himself, had always a strong persuasion that Goldsmith wrote *Goody Two Shoes* (an ingenious living critic has claimed *Tom Hickathrift* for Fielding); and if so, the effort belongs to the present year; for Mrs. Margery, radiant with gold and ginger-bread, and rich in pictures as extravagantly ill-drawn as they are dear and well-remembered, made her appearance at Christmas. Other aid was also sought to eke out that of Newbery; and a sum of thirteen guineas is acknowledged from Mr. Griffin (joint publisher in the *Essays* the following year), but without mention of the labours it rewarded.

That, in all these memoranda, the entire labours of the year cannot yet be accounted for, it is hardly necessary to add: we are left to guess what other work was in progress, for which advances were not available; and in this, an anecdote told by Reynolds will be some assistance. He went out to call upon Goldsmith, he says, not having seen

him for some time ; and no one answering at his door, he opened it without announcement, and walked in. His friend was at his desk, but with hand uplifted, and a look directed to another part of the room ; where a little dog sat with difficulty on his haunches, looking imploringly at his teacher, whose rebuke for toppling over he had evidently just received. Reynolds advanced, and looked past Goldsmith's shoulder at the writing on his desk. It seemed to be some portions of a poem. He looked more closely,



and was able to read a couplet which had been that instant written. The ink of the second line was wet.

“ By sports like these are all their cares beguiled,  
The sports of children satisfy the child.”



This visit of Reynolds is one of the few direct evidences which the year affords of his usual intercourse with his more distinguished friends. There is no reason to doubt, however, that he had been pretty constant in his attendance at the Club during the past winter; he was a member of the Society of Arts, and had been often at their meetings; and his miseries and necessities must have been great indeed, that would have kept him long a stranger to the Theatre.

The last season had been one of peculiar interest. The year 1763 had opened with evil omen to Garrick. For the first time since the memorable performance at Goodman's Fields, now twenty-two years ago, when, in the midst of unexampled enthusiasm, his eye fell upon a little deformed figure in a side box, was met by the approving glance of an eye as bright as his own, and, in the admiration of Alexander Pope, his heart swelled with the sense of fame, Garrick, at the commencement of that year, felt his influence shaken and his ground insecure. On a question of prices, the Fribble whom Churchill has gibbeted in the *Rosciad* led a riotous opposition in his theatre, to which he was compelled to offer a modified submission; and not many weeks later, after appearing in a comedy by Mrs. Sheridan and giving it out to be his last appearance in any new play (the character was a solemn old coxcomb, and one of his happiest performances), he announced his determination to go abroad for two years. The pretence was health; but the real cause (resentment

of what he thought the public indifference, and a resolve that they should feel his absence) is surmised in a note of Lord Bath's which lies before me, addressed to his nephew Colman, the *ad interim* manager of the theatre.

Garrick left London in the autumn ; and his first letter to Colman from Paris describes the honours which were showering upon him, the plays revived to please him, the veteran actors recalled to act before him. He had supped with Marmontel and d'Alembert ; ' the Clairon ' was at the supper and recited them a charming scene from *Athalie* ; and he had himself given the dagger scene in *Macbeth*, the curse in *Lear*, and the falling asleep in *Sir John Brute*, with such extraordinary effect, that ' the most wonderful ' wonder of wonders ' was nothing to it. Yet on the very day that letter was written (the 8th of October, 1763), a more wonderful wonder was enacting on his own theatre. A young bankers' clerk named Powell, to whom, on hearing him rehearse, he had given an engagement before he left London of three pounds a week for three years, appeared on that day in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster*, and took the audience by storm. Foote is described to have been the only unmoved spectator. The rest of the audience were not content with clapping ; they stood up and shouted ; and Foote's jeering went for nothing. Walpole describes the scene with what seems to be a satisfied secret persuasion (in which Goldsmith certainly shared) that Garrick had at last a dangerous rival. He calls the new actor ' what Mr. Pitt called my Lord Clive,' a heaven-born hero ;

says the heads of the whole town are turned ; and describes all the boxes taken for a month. Powell's salary was at once raised to ten pounds a week, George Garrick consenting on the part of his brother ; and such was the anxiety of the town to see him in new characters, and the readiness of the management in giving way to it, that in this his first season, from October '63 to May '64, he appeared in seventeen different plays, to a profit on the receipts of nearly seven thousand pounds. His most successful efforts indicate the attractive points of his style. In *Philaster* he appeared sixteen times, in *Posthumus* eleven, seven times in *Jaffier*, six in *Castalio*, and five in *Alexander*. Garrick himself had meanwhile written to him from Italy to warn him against such characters as the latter, and restrain him from attempting too much. The advice was admirably written, and gratefully acknowledged ; nor is there any reason to doubt its sincerity. Remoteness of place has in some respects the effect of distance of time ; and the great actor, doubtless not sorry to be absent till the novelty should abate, was less likely to be jealous in Piedmont or the Savoy than in the green-room of Drury Lane. He knew himself yet unassailed in what he had always felt to be his main strength, his versatility and variety of power. Three men were now dividing his laurels ; and till Powell could double *Richard* and *Sir John Brute*, till O'Brien could alternate *Ranger* with *Macbeth*, and till Weston could exhibit *Lear* by the side of *Abel Drugger*, Garrick had no call to be seriously alarmed.

Be that as it might, however, Powell's success was a great thing for the authors. He came to occupy for them, opportunely, a field which the other had avowedly abandoned; and Goldsmith, always earnest for the claims of writers, sympathized strongly in his success. Another incident of the theatrical season made hardly less noise. O'Brien's charms in *Ranger* and *Lovemore* proved too much for Lady Susan Ilchester, and she ran away with him. It cured Walpole for a time of his theatre-going. He had a few days before been protesting to his dear friend Mann that he had the republican spirit of an old Roman, and that his name was thoroughly Horatius; but an earl's daughter running away with a player, ran away with all his philosophy. He thought a footman would have been preferable; and could not have believed that Lady Susan would have stooped so low. On the other hand, Goldsmith speaks of O'Brien's elegance and accomplishments ('by nature formed to please,' said Churchill), and seems to think them not unfairly matched. But much depends on whether these things are viewed from a luxurious seat in the private boxes, or from a hard bench in the upper gallery.

Poverty pressed heavily just now upon Goldsmith, as I have said. His old friend Grainger came over on leave from his West India station, to bring out his poem of the *Sugar Cane*; and found him in little better plight than in his garret days. 'I taxed little Goldsmith for not writing,' he says to Percy, 'as he promised. His answer was that 'he never wrote a letter in his life . . . and 'faith I believe

‘him; except to a bookseller for money.’ In the present year, it would seem, he had more experience than success in applications of that kind. Yet he was also himself in communication with Grainger’s correspondent. Percy was busy with his *Reliques*; and in the collection and arrangement of that work, which, more than any other in its age, contributed to bring back to the study and appreciation of poetry, a natural, healthy, and passionate tone, took frequent counsel with Goldsmith. To their intercourse respecting it, we owe the charming ballad with the prettiest of opening lines, ‘Turn gentle hermit of the dale;’ and Percy admitted many obligations of knowledge and advice, in which no other man of letters in that day could so well have assisted him. The foremost of them, Johnson himself, was indifferent enough to the whole scheme; though at this time a visitor, with Miss Williams, in Percy’s vicarage-house.

Little else than a round of visitings, indeed, does the present year seem to have been to Johnson; though the call for his Shakspeare (on which he had so long been engaged) was never so urgent as now. He passed part of the spring with his friend Langton in Lincolnshire, where it was long remembered how suddenly, and to what amazement of the elders of the family, he had laid himself down on the edge of a steep hill behind the house, and rolled over and over to the bottom; he had stayed the summer months and part of August with Percy, at Easton Mauduit vicarage in Northamptonshire; and on

his return to town had formed an acquaintance with the Thrales. Is it necessary to describe the tall, stately, well-informed, worthy brewer, and tory member for Southwark; or his plump, little, brisk, vivacious, half-learned wife? Is not their friendship known as the solace of Johnson's later life, and remembered whenever he is named? Thrale was fond of the society of men of letters and celebrity; and Arthur Murphy, who had for some years acted as provider in that sort to the weekly dinners at Southwark and Streatham, had the honour of introducing Johnson. Mrs. Thrale was at this time as pretty as she was lively, garrulous, and young; to more than a woman's quickness of observation, added all a woman's gentleness and kindness of heart; indulged in literary airs and judgments, which she put on with an audacity as full of charms as of blunders; and beyond measure captivated Johnson. Where she came she brought him sunshine. Like some 'gay creature of the element' she flitted past the gloomy scholar, still over-toiled and weary, though resting at last. 'You little creatures,' he exclaimed, on her appearing before him one day in a dark-coloured dress, 'you should never wear those sort of clothes; they are unsuitable in every way. What! have not all insects gay colours?' The house of the hospitable brewer became to him a second home, where unaccustomed comforts awaited him, and his most familiar friends were invited to please him; immediately after his first visit, the Thursdays in every week were set apart for

dinner with the Thrales; and before long there was a 'Mr. Johnson's room' both in the Southwark mansion and the Streatham villa. Very obvious was the effect upon him. His melancholy was diverted, and his irregular habits lessened, all said who observed him closely; but not the less active were his sympathies still, in the direction of that Grub Street world of struggle and disaster, of cock-loft lodgings and penny ordinaries, from which he had at last effected his own escape.

An illustration of this, at the commencement of their intercourse, much impressed Mrs. Thrale. One day, she says, he was called abruptly from their house after dinner, and returning in about three hours, said he had been with an enraged author, whose landlady pressed him for payment within doors, while the bailiffs beset him without; that he was drinking himself drunk with madeira to drown care, and fretting over a novel which, when finished, was to be his whole fortune; but he could not get it done for distraction, nor dared he step out of doors to offer it to sale. Mr. Johnson therefore, she continues, set away the bottle, and went to the bookseller, recommending the performance, and devising some immediate relief; which when he brought back to the writer, the latter called the woman of the house directly, to partake of punch, and pass their time in merriment. 'It was not,' she concludes, 'till ten years after, I dare say, that something in Doctor Goldsmith's behaviour struck me with an idea that he was 'the very man; and then Johnson confessed that he was so.'

A more scrupulous and patient writer corrects some inaccuracies of the lively little lady, and professes to give the anecdote authentically from Johnson's own exact narration. 'I received one morning,' Boswell represents Johnson to have said, 'a message from poor Goldsmith ' that he was in great distress, and, as it was not in his ' power to come to me, begging that I would come to him ' as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised ' to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon ' as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had



' arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent ' passion. I perceived that he had already changed my ' guinea, and had got a bottle of madeira and a glass



‘ before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he  
‘ would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means  
‘ by which he might be extricated. He then told me that  
‘ he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to  
‘ me. I looked into it, and saw its merit ; told the land-  
‘ lady I should soon return ; and having gone to a book-  
‘ seller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith  
‘ the money, and he discharged his rent, not without rating  
‘ his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill.’

Nor does the rating seem altogether undeserved, since there cannot be a doubt that Mrs. Fleming was the landlady. The attempt to clear her fails. Tracing the previous incidents minutely, it is impossible to disconnect her from this consummation of them, with which, at the same time, every trace of Goldsmith’s residence in her house is brought to a close. The incident itself has nothing startling for the reader who is familiar with what has gone before it. It is the old story of distress, with the addition of a right to resent it which poor Goldsmith had not felt till now ; and in the violent passion, the tone of indignant reproach, and the bottle of madeira, one may see that recent gleams of success and worldly consideration have not strengthened the habits of endurance. The arrest is plainly connected with Newbery’s reluctance to make further advances ; and of all Mrs. Fleming’s accounts found among his papers, the only one unsettled is that for the summer months preceding the arrest. The manuscript of the novel (of which more hereafter) seems by both statements, in which the

discrepancies are not so great but that Johnson himself may be held accountable for them, to have been produced reluctantly, as a last resource; and it is possible, as Mrs. Thrale intimates, that it was still regarded as 'unfinished;' but if strong adverse reasons had not existed, Johnson would surely have carried it to Newbery. He did not do this. He went with it to Francis Newbery the nephew; does not seem to have given any very brilliant account of the 'merit' he had perceived in it (four years after its author's death he told Reynolds that he did not think it would have had much success); and rather with regard to Goldsmith's immediate want, than to any confident sense of the value of the copy, asked and obtained the sixty pounds. 'And Sir,' he said afterward, 'a sufficient price 'too, when it was sold; for then the fame of Goldsmith 'had not been elevated, as it afterwards was, by his '*Traveller*; and the bookseller had faint hopes of profit by 'his bargain. After the *Traveller*, to be sure, it was 'accidentally worth more money.'

On the poem, meanwhile, the elder Newbery *had* consented to speculate; and this circumstance may have made it hopeless to appeal to him with a second work of fancy. For on that very day of the arrest, the *Traveller* lay completed in the poet's desk. The dream of eight years, the solace and sustainment of his exile and poverty, verged at last to fulfilment or extinction; and the hopes and fears which centered in it, doubtless mingled on that miserable day with the fumes of the madeira! In the excitement

of putting it to press, which followed immediately after, the nameless novel recedes altogether from the view; but will reappear in due time. Johnson approved the verses more than the novel; read the proof-sheets for his friend; substituted here and there, in more emphatic testimony of general approval, a line of his own; prepared a brief but hearty notice for the *Critical Review*, which was to appear simultaneously with the poem; and as the day of publication approached, bade Goldsmith be of good cheer.

‘This day is published,’ said the *Public Advertiser* of the 19th of December, 1764, ‘price one shilling and six-pence, *The Traveller*; or a Prospect of Society, a Poem. By Oliver Goldsmith, M.B. Printed for J. Newbery in St. Paul’s Church Yard.’ It was the first time he had announced his name in connection with anything he had written; and with it he had resolved to associate his brother Henry’s name. To him he dedicated the poem. From the midst of the poverty which Henry could least alleviate, and turning from the celebrated men with whose favour his own fortunes were bound up, he addressed the friend and companion of his infancy, to whom, in all his sufferings and wanderings, his heart, untravelled and unsullied, had still lovingly gone back. ‘The friendship between us can acquire no new force from the ceremonies of a Dedication,’ he said; ‘but as a part of this poem was formerly written to you from Switzerland, the whole can now, with propriety, be only inscribed to you. It will also throw light upon many parts of it, when the

' reader understands that it is addressed to a man, who, ' despising fame and fortune, had retired early to happiness ' and obscurity, with an income of forty pounds a year. I ' now perceive, my dear brother,' continued Goldsmith, with affecting significance, ' the wisdom of your humble ' choice. You have entered upon a sacred office, where ' the harvest is great and the labourers are but few ; while ' you have left the field of ambition, where the labourers ' are many and the harvest not worth carrying away.' Such as the harvest was, however, he was at last himself about to gather it in. He proceeded to describe to his brother the object of his poem, as an attempt to show that there may be equal happiness in States that are differently governed from our own ; that every State has a particular principle of happiness, and that this principle in each may be carried to a mischievous excess : but expressed a strong doubt, since and not taken a political ' side,' whether its freedom individual and party abuse would not wholly bar its ss.

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While he wrote, he might have quieted that fear. As poem was passing through the press, Churchill died. As he who had pressed poetry into the service of party, for the last three years, to apparent exclusion of every other theme, made harsh political satire the favoured stance of the Muse. But his rude strong spirit had only given way. Those unsubdued passions ; those principles, unfettered rather than depraved ; that realness of soul, scorn of conventions, and unquestioned

courage; that open heart and liberal hand; that eager readiness to love or to hate, to strike or to embrace; had passed away for ever. Nine days earlier, his antagonist Hogarth had gone the same dark journey; and the reconciliation that would surely, even here, have sooner or later vindicated their common genius, the hearty English feeling which they shared, and their common cordial hatred of the falsehoods and pretences of the world, was left to be accomplished in the grave. Be it not the least shame of the profligate politics of these three disgraceful years, that, arraying in bitter hostility one section of a kingdom against the other, they turned into unscrupulous personal enemies such men as these; made a patriot of Wilkes; statesmen of Sir Francis Dashwood, Lord Sandwich, and Bubb Dodington; and, of the free and vigorous verse of Churchill, a mere instrument of perishable party. Not without reason on that ground did Goldsmith condemn and scorn it. It was that which had made it the rare mixture it so frequently is, of the artificial with the natural and impulsive; which so fitfully blended in its author the wholly and the partly true; which impaired his force of style with prosaic weakness; and controlled by the necessities of partizan satire, his feeling for nature and for truth. Yet should his critic and fellow-poet have paused before, in this dedication to the *Traveller*, he branded him as a writer of lampoons. To Charles Hanbury Williams, but not to Charles Churchill, such epithets belong. The senators who met to decide the fate of turbot were not worthier

of the wrath and the scourge of Juvenal, than the men who, reeking from the gross indulgences of Medmenham Abbey, drove out William Pitt from the Cabinet, sat down by the side of Bute, denounced in the person of Wilkes their own old profligate associate, and took the public morality into keeping. Never, that he might merely fawn upon power or trample upon weakness, had Churchill let loose his pen. There was not a form of mean pretence or servile assumption, which he did not use it to denounce. Low, pimping politics, he abhorred; and that their worthless abettors, to whose exposure his works are so incessantly devoted, have not carried him into oblivion with themselves, argues something for the sound morality and permanent truth expressed in his manly verse. By these the new poet was to profit; as much as by the faults which perished with the satirist, and left the lesson of avoidance to his successors. In the interval since Pope's and Thomson's death, since Collins's faint sweet song, since the silence of Young, of Akenside, and of Gray, no such easy, familiar, and vigorous verse as Churchill's, had dwelt in the public ear. The less likely was it now to turn away, impatient or intolerant of the *Traveller*.

Johnson pronounced it a poem to which it would not be easy to find anything equal, since the death of Pope. This was praise worth coveting, and was honestly deserved. The elaborate care and skill of the verse, the exquisite choice and selectness of the diction, at once recalled to others, as to Johnson, the master so lately absolute in

the realms of verse; and with these there was a mellow harmony of tone, a softness and simplicity of touch, a happy and playful tenderness, which belonged peculiarly to the later poet. With a less pointed and practised force of understanding than in Pope, and in some respects less subtle and refined, the appeal to the heart in Goldsmith is more gentle, direct, and pure. The predominant impression of the poem is of its naturalness and facility; and then is felt the surpassing charm with which its every-day genial fancies invest high thoughts of human happiness. The serene graces of its style, and the rich mellow flow of its verse, take us captive, before we feel the enchantment of its lovely images of various life, reflected from its calm still depths of philosophic contemplation. Above all do we perceive that it is a poem built upon nature; that it rests upon honest truth. It does not cry to the moon and the stars for impossible sympathy, or deal with other worlds, in fact or imagination, than the writer has lived in and known. Wisely had he avoided, what, in the false-heroic versifiers of his day, he had wittily condemned; the practice, even commoner since, of building up poetry on fantastic unreality, of clothing it in harsh inversions of language, and of patching it out with affectations of by-gone vivacity: 'as if the more it was unlike prose, the more it would resemble poetry.' His own poetical language is unadorned yet rich, select yet exquisitely plain, condensed yet home-felt and familiar. He has considered, as he says himself of Parnell, 'the language of poetry as

‘ the language of life, and conveys the warmest thoughts  
‘ in the simplest expression.’

In what way the *Traveller* originated, the reader has seen. It does not seem necessary to discuss in what precise proportions its plan may have risen out of Addison’s *Letter from Italy*, or been shaped by Thomson’s remark in one of his letters to Bubb Dodington ‘ that a poetical ‘ landscape of countries, mixed with moral observations on ‘ their characters and people, would not be an ill-judged ‘ undertaking.’ It had been, eminently and in a peculiar degree, written from personal feeling and observation ; and the course of its composition has been traced with the course of its author’s life. When Boswell came back to London some year or so after its appearance, he tells us with what amazement he had heard Johnson say that ‘ there had not been so fine a poem since Pope’s time ;’ and then amusingly explains the phenomenon by remarking, that ‘ much, no doubt, both of the sentiments and expression ‘ were derived from conversation ’ with the great lexicographer. What the great lexicographer really suggested was a title, *The Philosophic Wanderer* ; rejected for something simpler ; as, if offered, the Johnsonian sentiment and expression would, I suspect, have been. But ‘ Garth did ‘ not write his own *Dispensary*,’ and Goldsmith had still less chance of obtaining credit for his. The rumour that Johnson had given great assistance, is nevertheless contradicted by even Hawkins ; where he professes to relate the extreme astonishment of the Club, that a newspaper essayist



and bookseller's drudge should have written such a poem. Undoubtedly that was his own feeling; and others of the members shared it, though, it is to be hoped, in a less degree. 'Well,' exclaimed Chamier, 'I do believe he wrote this poem himself; and let me tell you, that is believing a great deal.' Goldsmith had left the Club early that night, after 'rattling away as usual.' In truth he took little pains himself, in the thoughtless simplicity of those social hours, to fence round his own property and claim. 'Mr. Goldsmith,' asked Chamier, at the next meeting of the Club, 'what do you mean by the last word 'in the first line of your *Traveller* ?

"Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow."

'Do you mean tardiness of locomotion?' Johnson, who was near them, took part in what followed, and has related it. 'Goldsmith, who would say something without consideration, answered "Yes." I was sitting by, and said, "No, sir, you did not mean tardiness of locomotion; you mean that sluggishness of mind which comes upon a man in solitude."' 'Ah!' exclaimed Goldsmith, 'that was what I meant.' 'Chamier,' Johnson adds, 'believed then that I had written the line, as much as if he had seen me write it.'

The lines which he really contributed he pointed out himself to Boswell, when laughing at the notion that he had taken any more important part in it. They were the line which now stands 420th in the poem; and, omitting

the last couplet but one, the eight concluding lines. The couplet so grafted on his friend's insertion by Goldsmith himself, is worth all that Johnson added ; though its historical allusion was somewhat obscure.

'The lifted axe, the agonising wheel,  
Luke's iron crown, and Damiens' bed of steel.'

Who was Luke, and what was his iron crown, is a question Tom Davies tells us he had often to answer ; being a great resource in difficulties of that kind. 'The Doctor 'referred me,' he says, in a letter to the Rev. Mr. Granger (who was compiling his *Biographical History*, and wished to be exact), 'to a book called *Geographie Curieuse*, for 'an explanation of Luke's iron crown.' The explanation did not mend matters much. 'Luke' had been taken simply for the euphony of the line. He was one of two brothers, Zeck, who headed a revolt against the Hungarian nobles, at the opening of the sixteenth century ; but though both were tortured, the special horror of the red-hot crown was inflicted upon George. 'Doctor Goldsmith says,' adds Davies, 'he meant by Damiens' iron 'the rack ; but *I believe* the newspapers informed us that 'he was confined in a high tower, and actually obliged 'to lie upon an iron bed.' So little was Davies, any more than Chamier, Johnson, or any one else, disposed to take the poet's meaning on the authority of his own explanation of it.

'Nay, sir,' said Johnson very candidly, when it was suggested, some years afterward, that the partiality of its

author's friends might have weighed too much in their judgment of this poem ; 'the partiality of his friends was 'always *against* him. It was with difficulty we could give 'him a hearing.' Explanation of much that receives too sharp a judgment in ordinary estimates of his character, seems to be found, as I have said, in this. When partiality takes the shape of pity, we must not wonder if it is met by the vanities, the conceits, the half shame and half bravado, of that kind of self assertion which is but self-distrust disguised. Very difficult did Goldsmith find it to force his way, with even the *Traveller* in his hand, against these patronising airs and charitable allowances. 'But he imitates you, 'sir,' said Mr. Boswell, when, on return from his Dutch studies, he found this poem had really gone far to make its writer, for the time, more interesting than even Johnson himself. 'Why no, sir,' Johnson answered. 'Jack 'Hawkesworth is one of my imitators ; but not Goldsmith. 'Goldy, sir, has great merit.' 'But sir,' persisted the staunch disciple, 'he is much indebted to you for his 'getting so high in the public estimation.' 'Why, sir,' complacently responded the sage, 'he has perhaps got 'sooner to it by his intimacy with me.'

Without the reserves, the merit might sometimes be allowed ; but seldom without something of a sting. 'Well, 'I never more shall think Doctor Goldsmith ugly,' was the frank tribute of the sister of Reynolds, after hearing Johnson read the *Traveller* aloud 'from the beginning to 'the end of it,' a few days after it was published. Here

was another point of friendliest and most general agreement. 'Renny dear,' now a mature and very fidgetty little dame of seven-and-thirty, had never been noted for her beauty; and few would associate such a thing with the seamed, scarred face of Johnson; but the preponderating ugliness of Goldsmith was a thing admitted and allowed for all to fling a stone at, however brittle their own habitations. Miss Reynolds had founded her admiring tribute on what she had herself said at a party in her brother's house some days before. She was asked for her toast after supper, as the custom was; and not answering readily, was required to give the ugliest man she knew. Without further hesitation she named Goldsmith; on which the Mrs. Cholmondeley of that day, with a sudden burst of sympathy, rose up on the other side of the table and reached across to shake hands with her. 'Thus,' exclaimed Johnson, who was present, and whose wit at his friend's expense was rewarded with a roar, 'thus the ancients, on the commencement of their friendships, used to sacrifice a beast 'betwixt them.' Poor Goldsmith! It was not till the sacrifice was more complete, and the grave had closed over it, that the 'partiality' of his friends ceased to take these equivocal shapes. 'There is not a bad line in that poem of 'the *Traveller*,' said Langton, as they sat talking together at Reynolds's, four years after the poet's death; 'not one 'of Dryden's careless verses.' 'I was glad,' interposed Reynolds, 'to hear Charles Fox say it was one of the 'first poems in the English language.' 'Why was you

glad?' rejoined Langton; 'you surely had no doubt of 'this before?' 'No,' exclaimed Johnson, decisively; 'the merit of the *Traveller* is so well established, that 'Mr. Fox's praise cannot augment it, nor his censure 'diminish it.'

Not very obvious at the first, however, was its progress to this decisive eminence. From the first it had its select admirers, but their circle somewhat slowly widened. 'The 'beauties of this poem,' observed the principal literary newspaper of the day, the *St. James' Chronicle*, two months after its publication, 'are so great and various, 'that we cannot but be surprised they have not been 'able to recommend it to more general notice.' Goldsmith began to think he had come too late into the world then existing, for any share of its poetical distinctions; that Pope and others had taken up the places; and that as but few at any one period can possess poetical reputation, he had hardly, in his own time, the chance of obtaining it. 'That,' said Johnson, when this saying was related to him, 'is one of the most sensible things 'I have ever heard of Goldsmith. It is difficult to get 'literary fame, and it is every day getting more difficult.' Nevertheless, though slowly, the poem seems to have advanced steadily. A month after the notice in the *St. James' Chronicle*, a second edition was published; a third was more quickly called for; a fourth was issued in August; and the ninth had appeared in the year when the poet died. That anything more substantial

than fame arose to him out of these editions, is, however, very questionable: the only payment that can with certainty be traced in Newbery's papers as for '*Copy of the Traveller a poem,*' leaves it more than doubtful, whether for twenty guineas Goldsmith had not surrendered all his interest in it; except that which, with each successive edition, still prompted the limæ labor. Between the first and last, thirty-six new lines had been added, and fourteen of the old cancelled. Some of the erasures would now, perhaps, raise a smile. No honest thought disappeared, no manly word for the oppressed. The 'wanton judge' and his 'penal statutes' remained; indignant denunciations of the tyrannies of wealth, sorrowful and angry protestings that 'laws grind the poor and rich men rule the law,' were still undisturbed. But words quietly vanished, here and there, that had spoken too plainly of the sordid past; and no longer did the poet proclaim, in speaking of the great, that, 'inly satisfied,' above their pomps he held his 'ragged pride.' The rags went the way of the confession of poverty in the *Polite Learning*; and of those hints of humble habits which were common in the *Busy Body* and the *British Magazine*, but are found no longer in *Essays by Mr. Goldsmith*.

With that title, and the motto '*Collecta Revirescunt,*' a three-shilling duodecimo volume of those re-published *Essays* was now issued by Mr. Newbery and Mr. Griffin, who paid him each ten guineas for liberty to offer this tribute to the growing reputation of the *Traveller*. He

corrected expressions, as I have said ; lifted Islington tea-gardens into supper at Vauxhall ; exalted the stroll in White Conduit to a walk in the Parks ; and, in an amusing preface, disclaimed any more ambitious motive than one of self-preservation in collecting such fragments. As many entertainers of the public, he said, had been partly living upon him for some years, he was now resolved to try if he could not live a little upon himself ; and he compared his case to that of the fat man he had heard of in a shipwreck, who, when the sailors, pressed by famine, were taking slices off him to satisfy their hunger, insisted, with great justice, on having the first cut for himself. ‘ Most of these Essays,’ continued Goldsmith, ‘ have been ‘ regularly reprinted twice or thrice a year, and conveyed ‘ to the public through the kennel of some engaging compilation. If there be a pride in multiplied editions, I ‘ have seen some of my labours sixteen times reprinted, ‘ and claimed by different parents as their own. I have ‘ seen them flourished at the beginning with praise, and ‘ signed at the end with the names of Philautos, Philalethes, Phileleutheros, and Philanthropos.’ Names that already figured, as the reader will hardly need to be reminded, in those adventures of a philosophic vagabond which formed part of the little manuscript novel now lying, apparently little cared for, on the dusty shelves of Mr. Francis Newbery.

Another piece of writing which belongs to this period, and which did not find its way to the public till the

appearance of the novel, to whose pages (with the title of the *Hermit*) it had been transferred, was the ballad of *Edwin and Angelina*. It was suggested, as I have said, in the course of his ballad discussions with Percy in preparation of the *Reliques*, and written before the *Traveller* appeared. 'Without informing any of us,' says Hawkins, again referring to the Club, 'he wrote and addressed to 'the Countess, afterwards Duchess, of Northumberland, 'one of the first poems of the lyric kind that our language 'has to boast of.' A charming poem undoubtedly it is, if not quite this; delightful for its simple and mingled flow of incident and imagery; for the pathetic softness and sweetness of its tone; and for its easy, artless grace. He had taken pains with it, and set more than common store by it himself; so that when, some two years hence, his old enemy Kenrick taking advantage of its appearance in the novel, assumed the character of 'Detector' in the public prints, denounced it as a plagiarism from the *Reliques*, and entreated the public to compare the insipidity of Doctor Goldsmith's negus with the genuine flavour of Mr. Percy's champagne, he thought it worth while, even against that assailant, to defend his own originality. The poem it was charged to have copied, was a composition by Percy of stanzas old and new (much modern writing entered into the 'ancient' reliques; the editor publishing among them, for example, his friend Grainger's entirely modern and exquisite ballad of *Bryan and Pereene*): and Goldsmith's answer was to the effect that he did not think there was



any great resemblance between the two pieces in question ; but that if any existed, Mr. Percy's ballad was the imitation, inasmuch as the *Edwin and Angelina* had been read to him two years before (in the present year), and at their next meeting he had observed, 'with his usual good humour,' that he had taken the plan of it to form the fragments of Shakspeare into a ballad of his own. 'He then,' added Goldsmith, 'read me his little Cento, if I may so call it, 'and I highly approved it.'

Out of these circumstances it of course arose that Goldsmith's ballad was shown to the wife of Percy's patron, who had some taste for literature and affected a little notice of its followers. The Countess admired it so much that she had a few copies privately printed. I have seen the late Mr. Heber's, with the title-page of '*Edwin and Angelina*, a ballad ; by Mr. Goldsmith : printed for 'the amusement of the Countess of Northumberland.' It is now rare ; and has a value independent of its rarity, in its illustration of Goldsmith's habit of elaboration and pains-taking in the correction of his verse. By comparing it with what was afterwards published, we perceive that even the gentle opening line has been an after-thought ; that four stanzas have been re-written ; and that the two which originally stood last have been removed altogether. These, for their simple beauty of expression, it is worth while here to preserve. The action of the poem having closed without them, they were on better consideration rejected ; and young writers should meditate such lessons. Posterity has

always too much upon its hands to attend to what is irrelevant or needless ; and none so well as Goldsmith seems to have known, that the writer who would hope to live must live by the perfection of his style, and by the cherished and careful beauty of unsuperfluous writing.

“ Here amidst sylvan bowers we'll rove,  
From lawn to woodland stray ;  
Blest as the songsters of the grove,  
And innocent as they.

“ To all that want, and all that wail,  
Our pity shall be given ;  
And when this life of love shall fail,  
We'll love again in heaven.”

Intercourse with Northumberland House began and ended with this poem. Its author is only afterwards to be traced there on one occasion, characteristically described by Hawkins. ‘Having one day,’ he says, ‘a call to wait on the late Duke then Earl of Northumberland, I found Goldsmith waiting for an audience in an outer room. I asked him what had brought him there : he told me an invitation from his lordship. I made my business as short as I could, and, as a reason, mentioned that Doctor Goldsmith was waiting without. The Earl asked me if I was acquainted : I told him I was, adding what I thought likely to recommend him. I retired, and staid in the outer room to take him home. Upon his coming out, I asked him the result of his conversation. “ His lordship,” says he, “ told me he had read my “ poem,” meaning the *Traveller*, “ and was much de-

“lighted with it; that he was going Lord Lieutenant  
“of Ireland” (the earl was already Lord Lieutenant,  
and held that office till Grenville’s ministry went out),  
“and that, hearing I was a native of that country,  
“he should be glad to do me any kindness.” And  
‘what did you answer, asked I, to this gracious offer?  
“Why,” said he, “I could say nothing but that I had a  
“brother there, a clergyman, that stood in need of help.  
“As for myself” (this was added for the benefit of  
Hawkins) “I have no dependence on the promises of  
“great men. I look to the booksellers for support.  
“They are my best friends, and I am not inclined to  
“forsake them for others.” Thus, adds the teller of the  
anecdote, ‘thus did this idiot in the affairs of the world,  
‘trifle with his fortunes, and put back the hand that was  
‘held out to assist him! Other offers of a like kind he  
‘either rejected or failed to improve: contenting himself  
‘with the patronage of one nobleman, whose mansion  
‘afforded him the delights of a splendid table, and a  
‘retreat for a few days from the metropolis.’

The incident related may excuse the comment attached to it. Indeed the charge of idiotcy in the affairs of the Hawkins world, may even add to the pleasure with which we contemplate that older world picture beside it, of frank simplicity and brotherly affection. This poor poet, who, incomprehensibly to the Middlesex magistrate, would thus gently have turned aside to the assistance of his poorer brother, the hand held out to assist himself, had only a

few days before been obliged to borrow fifteen shillings and sixpence 'in Fleet Street,' of one of those 'best friends' with whose support he is now fain to be contented. But the reader has already seen that since the essay on *Polite Learning* was written, its author's personal experience had sufficed to alter his view as to the terms and relations on which Literature could hereafter hope to stand with the great; and the precise value of Lord Northumberland's offer seems in itself somewhat doubtful. Percy, indeed, took a subsequent opportunity of stating that he had discussed the subject with the earl; and had received an assurance that if the latter could have known how to serve Goldsmith, if he had been made aware, for example, that he wished to travel, 'he would have taken care to furnish 'him with sufficient means by a salary on the Irish establishment.' But this was not said till after Goldsmith's death; and when many ways of serving him, meanwhile, had been suffered to pass by unheeded. The booksellers, on the other hand, were patrons with whom success at once established claims, independent and incontrovertible; and the *Traveller*, to a less sanguine heart than its writer's, already seemed to separate, with a broad white line, the past from that which was to come. No Griffiths bondage could await him again. He had no longer any personal bitterness, therefore, to oppose to Johnson's general allegiance to the 'trade;' though at the same time, with Johnson, he made special and large reservations. For instance, there was old Gardner the bookseller. Even Griffiths, by the side

of Gardner, looked less ill-favoured. This was he who had gone to Kit Smart in the depths of his poverty, and drawn him into the most astounding agreement on record. It was not discovered till poor Kit Smart went mad; and Goldsmith had but to remember *how* it was discovered, to forgive all the huffing speeches that Johnson might ever make to him! 'I wrote, sir,' said the latter, 'for some months in the *Universal Visitor* for poor Smart, not then knowing the terms on which he was engaged to write, and thinking I was doing him good. I hoped his wits would soon return to him. Mine returned to me, and I wrote in the *Universal Visitor* no longer.' It was a sixpenny monthly pamphlet; the agreement was for ninety-nine years; and the terms were that Smart was to write nothing else, and be rewarded with one-sixth of the profits! It was undoubtedly a thing to remember, this agreement of old Gardner's. The most thriving subject in the kingdom of the booksellers could hardly fail to recall it now and then. And the very man to remind Goldsmith of it, in good-natured contrast to the opportunity he had lost, was the companion with whom he left Northumberland house that day.

The nobleman to whom Hawkins refers at the close of his anecdote, was not yet ennobled; nor could the relation he had opened with Goldsmith on the appearance of the *Traveller* be properly described as one of 'patronage.' Mr. Robert Nugent, the younger son of an old and wealthy Westmeath family, was a jovial Irishman and man

of wit, who proffered hearty friendship to Goldsmith at this time as a fellow patriot and poet, and maintained ever after an easy intercourse with him. In early life he had written an ode to Pulteney which contains one masterly verse,

(' What though the good, the brave, the wise,  
With adverse force undaunted rise,  
To break the eternal doom !  
Though Cato lived, though Tully spoke,  
Though Brutus dealt the god-like stroke,  
Yet perished fated Rome,')

and had attached himself to the party of the Prince of Wales, whom he largely assisted with money. In the imaginary Leicester House administrations commemorated by Bubb Dodington, he was always appointed to office; and had held appointments more substantial as comptroller of the prince's household, a lord of the treasury, and vice-treasurer of Ireland. He talked well, though coarsely, and was a great favourite with women. His first wife, Lord Fingal's daughter, brought him a good fortune, and bore him a son; with his second wife, the sister and heiress of Secretary Craggs (Pope's friend), though he had scanty felicity and no issue, he obtained one of the finest domains in Essex and the mansion of Gosfield Hall; and from a third more luckless marriage, with the Countess Dowager of Berkeley, sprang the daughter (its only issue he consented to recognise), in whose later union with the Marquis of Buckingham the names of Grenville and Nugent became blended. Richard Glover (the epic poet of Leicester

House) characterises him briefly as a jovial voluptuous Irishman who had left popery for the protestant religion, money, and widows; but Glover lived to see him surrender these favourites, and, not far from his eightieth year, go back to popery again. When his friendship with Goldsmith began, he was a tall, stout, vigorous man of nearly sixty, with a remarkably loud voice and a broad Irish brogue; whose strong and ready wit, careless decision of manner, and reckless audacity of expression, obtained him always a hearing from the house of commons, in which he had sat for four-and-twenty years. He was now watching with more than ordinary personal interest the turn of the political wheel. So was his new friend Goldsmith, and every member of the Gerrard-street Club.

The ministry which succeeded Bute's (that of George Grenville and the Bedfords, or, as they were called, the Bloomsbury gang) was coming to a close at last, after a series of impolitic blunders without parallel in the annals of statesmen. Early in March of the previous year ('64), after convulsing England from end to end with the question of general warrants and the ignoble persecution of Wilkes, the first attempt was made upon America which roused her to rebellion. In the autumn of that year, all her towns and cities were in loud and vehement protest; and before the year closed, Benjamin Franklin had placed in Grenville's hands a solemn protest of resistance on the part of his fellow colonists to any proposition to tax them without their consent. But as yet, this met with little

sympathy in England, and to the stubborn nature of Grenville, fear was as strange as wisdom. With only one division in the Commons, when the attendance was most paltry, and without a single negative in the Lords, he passed, at the opening of the present year, the act which created the Republic of America. Burke was under the commons' gallery during its progress (it had been his habit for some months to attend almost every discussion), and said, nine years afterward, that, far from anything inflammatory, he had never in his life heard so languid a debate. Horace Walpole described it to Lord Hertford as a 'slight day on the American taxes.' Barré, who had served in America and knew the temper of the people, was the only man whose language approached to the occasion; and as he had lately lost his regiment for his vote against general warrants, it was laughed at as the language of a disappointed man. Pitt was absent. On occasions less momentous he had come to the house on crutches, swathed in flannel; yet now he was absent. He afterwards prayed that some friendly hand could have laid him prostrate on the floor of the house to bear his testimony against the bill; but it is doubtful if the desire to see Grenville more completely prostrate, had not had more to do with his absence than either gout or fever. The minister's triumph in his Stamp Act, however, was brief. The king had hardly given it his glad assent, when the first slight seizure of the terrible malady which afterwards more sorely afflicted him, necessitated an act of regency; and the



mismanagement of the provisions of that act hopelessly embroiled the minister with the king. Then came the clash and confusion of the parties into which the once predominant old Whig party had been lately rent asunder, and which the present strange and sullen seclusion of Pitt made it hopeless to think of reuniting. In vain he was appealed to; in vain the poor king made piteous submissions to induce him to return to power. Fortunate in legacies, a Somersetshire baronet whom he had never seen had just left him three thousand a year; and it began to be whispered about that he would not take office again. The opposition lost ground, and the ministry did not gain it: the coercion laid upon the king became notorious; the city was shaken with riots, which in the general disorganization of affairs rose almost to rebellion; and while on the one hand a new administration seemed impossible without the help of Pitt, on the other it was plain that Grenville and the Bedfords were tottering to their final fall. The king was intensely grateful to them for their invasion of the public liberties; had joyfully cooperated with them in the taxation of America; but hated them because they hated Bute (who had placed them in power), because they had insulted his mother the Princess Dowager (whose intrigues had sustained them in power), and because they suffered Buckingham Gardens to be overlooked rather than vote him a somewhat paltry grant (which would have secured to the crown what is now Belgravia). It was his own chosen system of government to govern without

party, and solely by the favour of the crown ; and here were its four years' fruits. His ministers had become his tyrants, and statesmen held themselves aloof from his service. When his uncle Cumberland came back from Hayes with Pitt's formal refusal, he thought in his despair of even the old Duke of Newcastle; began to make atonement for recent insults to the house of Devonshire ; and threw out baits for those old pure Whigs who had been to this time the objects of his most concentrated hatred. Doubts and distrust shook Leicester House, in which Nugent of course shared largely; and expectation stood on tip-toe in Gerrard-street, where the Club could hardly avoid taking interest in what affected the fortunes of Edmund Burke.

For Burke, not unreasonably, looked to obtain employment in the scramble. Hawkins said he had always meant to offer himself to the highest bidder ; but the calumny is hardly worth refuting. He had honourably disengaged himself from Hamilton, and scornfully given back his pension ; nor were his friends kept in ignorance that he had since attached himself to the party of Whigs the most pure and least powerful in the state. Lord Rockingham was at their head : a young nobleman of princely fortune and fascinating manners, who made up for powers of oratory, in which he was wholly deficient, by an inestimable art of attracting and securing friends ; whose character was unstained by any of the intrigues of the past ten years ; and who had selected for his associates men like himself, less noted for their brilliant talents than

for their excellent sense and spotless honour. The manly independence as well as great landed influence of the old Yorkshire family of Savile, was worthily represented in their ranks by the present member for the county, Sir George: and with him were associated the shrewd clear honesty and financial ability of Dowdeswell, a country gentleman of Worcestershire; and the many rare virtues of the Duke of Devonshire's youngest uncle, Lord John Cavendish, who, not more remarkable for his fair little clownish person than for his princely soul, carried out in politics the principles of private honour with what Walpole sneeringly calls 'the tyranny of a moral philosopher.' With the extremer Temple opinions, these men had little in common. Though staunch against general warrants and invasions of liberties and franchises, they were as far from being Wilkite as the reckless demagogue himself; and they had obtained the general repute of a kind of middle constitutional party. Little compatible with present popularity, Burke knew; but he saw beyond the ignorant present. To the last he hoped that Pitt might be moved; and late in the May of this year so expressed himself to his friend Flood, in a letter which is curious evidence of his possession of the political secrets of the day: but though believing that without the splendid talents and boundless popularity of the Great Commoner, 'an admirable and lasting system' could not then be formed, he also believed that the only substitute for Pitt's genius was Rockingham's sense and good faith, and that on this plain

foundation might be gradually raised a party that should revive Whig purity and honour, and last when Pitt should be no more. Somewhat thus, too, the honest and brave Duke of Cumberland may have reasoned ; when to his hapless nephew, again crying out to him in utter despair, and imploring him, with or without Pitt, to save him from George Grenville and the Duke of Bedford, he gave his final counsel. Lord Rockingham was summoned ; consented, with his party, to take office ; and was sworn in First Lord on the 8th of July. Lord Shelburne would not join without Pitt : but a young Whig duke (Grafton), of whom much was at that time expected, gave in his adhesion ; and General Conway, Cumberland's personal friend, a braver soldier than politician, but a persuasive speaker, and an honourable as well as most popular man, gave his help as Secretary of State : William Burke, Edmund's distant relative and dear friend, being appointed his Under-Secretary. Upon this the old meddling Duke of Newcastle went and warned Conway's chief against these Burkes. Edmund's real name, he said, was *O'Bourke* ; and he was not only an Irish adventurer, a Jacobite, and a Papist, but he had shrewd reasons for believing him a concealed Jesuit to boot. Nevertheless, seven days after the administration was formed, the Jesuit and Jacobite, introduced by their common friend Fitzherbert (who had been named to the board of trade), was appointed private secretary to the Marquis of Rockingham ; and Burke's great political life began.

His first letter, written from Queen Anne Street the day after his appointment, was to David Garrick ; and it will properly restore to us, after this slight and not unneedful digression, the society of wits and men of letters to which this narrative belongs. Burke pleasantly invokes his friend as his 'little Horace,' his 'lepidissime homuncio,' to call and see his 'Mæcenas atavis,' and 'praise this administration of Cavendishes and Rockinghams in ode, and 'abuse their enemies in epigram.' Garrick had arrived in England, from his foreign tour, three months before ; his old weaknesses coming back as he verged nearer and nearer home, and, for his last few days in Paris, disturbing him with visions of Powell. 'I'll answer for nothing and 'nobody in a playhouse,' he wrote to Colman ; 'the 'devil has put his hoof into it, and he was a deceiver from 'the beginning of the world. Tell me really what you 'think of Powell. I am told by several that he *will* bawl 'and roar. Ross, I hear, has got reputation in *Lear*. I 'don't doubt it. The Town is a facetious gentleman.' A few days later, Sterne wrote to him from Bath 'strange' things of Powell ; and when on the point of starting for London, he met Beauclerc accidentally, who reported of the new tragedian not less strangely. 'Have you advised 'him?' he wrote again to Colman. 'Do you see him? 'Is he grateful? is he modest? Or, is he conceited and 'undone?' Nor could the uneasy little great actor bring himself to make his journey home, till he had privately sent on for anonymous publication at the moment of his

arrival, a rhymed satirical fable in anticipation and forestalment of expected Grub Street attacks, wherein he humbly depicted himself as *The Sick Monkey*, and the whole race of other animals railing at the monkey and his travels. But it was labour all thrown away. Grub Street, when he came, showed no sign of discomposure; and there was but one desire in London and Westminster, to see their favourite actor again.

Let us not be surprised if these intolerable vanities and self-distrusts weighed, with contemporaries of his own grade, against the better qualities of this delightful man, and pressed down the scale. Johnson loved him, but could not show it for hatred of his foppery; Goldsmith admired him, yet was ready to join in any scheme for his mortification and annoyance. Two things had been done in his absence to which he addressed himself with great anxiety on his return. The Covent Garden actors had established a voluntary benefit subscription, to relieve their poorer fellows in distress; and, jealous of such a proposal without previous consultation with himself, he was now throwing all his energy into a similar fund at Drury Lane, which should excel and over-rule the other. Without him too, the Club had been established; but as he could not hope to succeed in setting up a rival to *that*, he was using every anxious means to secure his own immediate election. Johnson resolutely opposed it. Reynolds first conveyed to him Garrick's wish, to the effect that he liked the idea of the Club excessively, and thought he

should be of them. 'He'll be of us!' exclaimed Johnson; 'how does he know we will permit him?' 'The first duke in England has no right to hold such language.' To Thrale, the next intercessor, he threw out even threats of a blackball; but this moved the worthy brewer to remonstrate warmly; and Johnson, thus hard pressed, picked up somewhat recklessly a line of Pope's, as in self-defence one might pick up a stone by the way-side, without regard to its form or fitness. 'Why sir, I love my little David dearly, better than all or any of his flatterers do; but surely one ought to sit in a society like ours "unelbow'd by a gamester, "pimp, or player."' Still the subject was not suffered to let drop, and the next who undertook it was Hawkins. 'He will disturb us, sir, by his buffoonery;' was the only and obdurate answer. Garrick saw that for the present it was hopeless (though at this very time Percy obtained his election); and, with his happier tact and really handsome spirit, visited Johnson as usual, and seemed to withdraw his claim. But he could not conceal his uneasiness. 'He would often stop at my gate,' says Hawkins, who lived at Twickenham, 'in his way to and from Hampton, with messages from Johnson relating to his Shakespeare, then in the press, and ask such questions as these: "Were you at the Club on Monday night? What did you talk of? Was Johnson there? I suppose he said something of Davy? That Davy was a clever fellow in his way, full of convivial pleasantry, but no poet,

“no writer, ha!” Hawkins might hear all this, however, with better grace than any one else; for that worthy magistrate took little interest in the Club. In a letter written shortly after, Johnson specially mentions him as remiss in attendance, while he admits that he is himself not over diligent. ‘Dyer, Doctor Nugent, Doctor Goldsmith, and Mr. Reynolds,’ he adds, ‘are very constant.’

Without its dignified doctorial prefix, Goldsmith’s name is now seldom mentioned; even Newbery is careful to preserve it in memoranda of books lent for purposes of compilation; and he does not seem, himself, to have again laid it wholly aside. Indeed he now made a brief effort, at the suggestion of Reynolds, to make positive professional use of it. It was much to have a regular calling, said the successful painter; it gave a man social rank, and consideration in the world. Advantage should be taken of the growing popularity of the *Traveller*. To be at once physician and man of letters, was the most natural thing possible: there were the Arbuthnots and Garths, to say nothing of Cowley himself, among the dead; there were the Akensides, Graingers, Armstrongs, and Smolletts, still among the living; and where was the degree in medicine belonging to any of them, to which the degree in poetry or wit had not given more glad acceptance? Out came Goldsmith accordingly (in the June of this year, according to the account books of Mr. William Filby the tailor), in purple silk small-clothes, a handsome scarlet roquelaure buttoned



to his chin, and with all the additional importance derivable from a full dress professional wig, a sword, and a gold-headed cane. The style of the coat and small-clothes may be presumed from the 'four guineas and a half' paid for them; and as a child with its new toy is uneasy without swift renewal of the pleasurable excitement, with no less than three similar suits, not less expensive, Goldsmith amazed his friends in the next six months. The dignity he was obliged to put on with these fine clothes, indeed, left him this as their only enjoyment; for he had found it much harder to give up the actual reality of his old humble haunts, of his tea at the White Conduit, of his ale-house club at Islington, of his nights at the Wrekin or St. Giles's, than to blot their innocent but vulgar names from his now genteeler page. In truth, he would say, one has to make vast sacrifices for good company's sake; 'for here am I 'shut out of several places where I used to play the fool 'very agreeably.' Nor is it quite clear that the most moderate accession of good company, professionally speaking, rewarded this reluctant gravity. The only instance remembered of his practice, was in the case of a Mrs. Sidebotham, described as one of his recent acquaintance of the better sort; whose waiting-woman was often afterwards known to relate with what a ludicrous assumption of dignity he would show off his cloak and his cane, as he strutted with his queer little figure, stuck through as with a huge pin by his wandering sword, into the sick-room of her mistress. At last it one day happened, that, his

opinion differing somewhat from the apothecary's in attendance, the lady thought her apothecary the safer counsellor, and Goldsmith quitted the house in high indignation. He would leave off prescribing for his friends, he said. 'Do 'so, my dear Doctor,' observed Beauclerc. 'Whenever 'you undertake to kill, let it only be your enemies.'



His literary engagements were meanwhile going on with Newbery; and toward the close of the year he seems to have completed a compilation of a kind somewhat novel to him, induced in all probability by his concurrent professional attempts. It was '*A Survey of Experimental*

'*Philosophy*, considered in its present state of improvement;' and Newbery paid him sixty guineas for it. He also took great interest at this time in the proceedings of the Society of Arts; and is supposed, from the many small advances entered in Newbery's memoranda as made in connection with that Society, to have contributed sundry reports and disquisitions on its proceedings and affairs, to a new commercial and agricultural magazine in which the busy publisher had engaged. It was certainly not an idle year with him; though what remains in proof of his employment is scant and indifferent enough. Johnson's blind pensioner, Miss Williams, had for several months been getting together a subscription volume of miscellanies, to which he had promised a poem; and complains that she found him always too busy to redeem his promise, and was continually put off with a 'Leave it to me.' Nor was Johnson, who had made like promises, much better. 'Well, we'll think about it,' was his form of excuse. With Johnson, in truth, a year of most unusual exertion had succeeded his year of visitings, and he had at last completed, nine years later than he promised it, his Edition of Shakespeare. It came out in October, in eight octavo volumes; and was bitterly assailed (nor, it may be admitted, without a certain coarse smartness) by Kenrick, who, in one of the notes to his attack, coupling 'learned doctors of Dublin,' with 'doctorial dignities of Rheims and Louvain,' may have meant a sarcasm at Goldsmith. I have indicated the latter place as the

probable source of his medical degree ; and, three months before, Dublin University had conferred a doctorship on Johnson, though not until ten years later, when Oxford did him similar honour, did he consent to assume the title. He had now, I may add, left his Temple chambers, and become master of a house in one of the courts in Fleet Street which bore his own name ; and where he was able to give lodging on the ground floor to Miss Williams, and in the garret to Robert Levet. It is remembered as a decent house, with stout old-fashioned mahogany furniture. Goldsmith appears meanwhile to have got into somewhat better chambers in the same (Garden) court where his library stair-case chambers stood ; which he was able to furnish more decently ; and to which we shortly trace (by the help of Mr. Filby's bills, and their memoranda of altered suits) the presence of a man-servant.

So passed the year 1765. It was the year in which he had first felt any advantage of rank arising from Literature ; and it closed upon him as he seems to have resolved to make the most of his growing importance, and enjoy it in all possible ways. Joseph Warton, now preparing for the head mastership of Winchester school, was in London at the opening of 1766, and saw something of the society of the Club. He had wished to see Hume ; but Hume, though he had left Paris (where he had been secretary of the embassy to Lord Hertford, recalled and sent to Dublin by the new administration), was not yet in London. A strange Paris 'season' it had been, and odd

and ill-assorted its assemblage of visitors. There had Sterne, Foote, Walpole, and Wilkes, been thrown together at the same dinner-table. There had Hume, with his broad Scotch accent, his unintelligible French, his imbecile fat face, and his corpulent body, been the object of enthusiasm without example, and played the Sultan in pantomimic tableaux to the prettiest women of the time. There had the author of the *Heloise* and the *Contrat Social*, half crazed with the passionate admiration which had welcomed his *Emile*, and flattered out of the rest of his wits by the persecution that followed it, stalked about with all Paris at his heels, in a caftan and Armenian robes, and so enchanted the Scotch philosopher, to whom he seemed a sort of better Socrates, that he had offered him a home in England. There was the young painter student, Barry, writing modest letters on his way to Rome, where William and Edmund Burke had subscribed out of their limited means to send him. There was the young lion-hunting Boswell, more pompous and conceited than ever; as little laden with law from Utrecht, where he has studied since we saw him last, as with heroism from Corsica, where he has visited Pascal Paoli, or with wit from Ferney, where he has been to see Voltaire; pushing his way into every salon, inflicting himself on every celebrity, and ridiculed by all. There, finally, was Horace Walpole, twinged with the gout and smarting from political slight, revenging himself with laughter at every body around him and beyond him: now with aspiring Geoffrin and the philosophers, now with

blind Du Deffand and the wits, ('women who violated all 'the duties of life and gave very pretty suppers'); lumping up in the same contempt, Wilkes and Foote, Boswell and Sterne; proclaiming as impostors in their various ways, alike the jesuits, the methodists, the philosophers, the politicians, the encyclopedists, the hypocrite Rousseau, the scoffer Voltaire, the Humes, the Lyttletons, the Grenvilles, the atheist tyrant of Prussia, and the mountebank of history Mr Pitt; and counting a ploughman who sows, reads his almanack, and believes the stars but so many farthing candles created to prevent his falling into a ditch as he goes home at night, wiser, more rational, and honester than any of them. Such was the winter society of Paris; let Joseph Warton describe what he saw of Literature in London. 'I dined with Johnson,' he writes to his brother, 'who seemed cold and indifferent, 'and scarce said anything to me. Perhaps he has heard 'what I said of his Shakespeare. Of all solemn coxcombs, Goldsmith is the first; yet sensible; but affects 'to use Johnson's hard words in conversation. We had a 'Mr. Dyer, who is a scholar and a gentleman. Garrick 'is entirely off from Johnson, and cannot, he says, forgive 'him his insinuating that he withheld all his old 'editions.'

What Garrick could with greater difficulty forgive (the *Preface* to Shakespeare is referred to) was the absence of any mention of his acting. He had not withheld his old plays; he had been careful, through others, to let

Johnson understand (too notoriously careless of books, as he was, to be safely trusted with rare editions) that the books were at his service, and that in his absence abroad the keys of his library had, with that view solely, been entrusted to a servant : but this implied an overture from Johnson, who thought it Garrick's duty, on the contrary, to make overtures to him ; who knew that the other course involved acknowledgments he was not prepared to make ; and who laughed at nothing so much, on Davy's subsequent loan of all his plays to George Steevens, as when he read this year, in the first publication of that acute young Mephistophelean critic, that ' Mr. Garrick's zeal would ' not permit him to withhold anything that might ever so ' remotely tend to show the perfections of that author *who only could have enabled him to display his own.*' Johnson could not hit off a compliment of such satirical nicety ; he must have praised honestly, if at all, and it went against his grain to do it. He let out the reason to Boswell eight years afterward. ' Garrick has been liberally paid, ' sir, for anything he has done for Shakespeare. If I should ' praise him, I should much more praise the nation who ' paid him.' With better reason he used to laugh at his managerial preference of the players' text (which it is little to the credit of the stage that the latest of the great actors should have been the first to depart from), and couple it with a doubt if he had ever examined one of the original plays from the first scene to the last. Nor did Garrick take all this quietly. The king had commanded

his reappearance in *Benedict* at the close of the year; and, though he did not think it safe to resume any part of which Powell was in possession, except *Lusignan*, *Lothario*, and *Leon*, his popularity had again shone forth unabated. It brought back his sense of power; and with it a disposition to use it, even against Johnson. The latter had not hesitated, notwithstanding their doubtful relations, to seek to 'secure an honest prejudice' in favour of his book, by formally asking the popular actor's 'suffrage' for it on its appearance; yet the suffrage of the popular actor was certainly exerted against it. That Johnson had not a taste for the finest productions of genius, Garrick was soon afterward very busy to explain. With *Iago's* ingenious mischief, with *Hal's* gay compliance in *Falstaff's* vices, such a critic might be at home; but from *Lear* in the storm, and from *Macbeth* on the blasted heath, he must be content to be far away. He could, there, but mount the high horse, and bluster about imperial tragedy. The tone was caught by the actor's friends; is perceptible throughout his correspondence; is in the letters of Warburton, and in such as I have quoted of the Wartons; and gradually, to even Johnson's disturbance, passed from society into the press, and became a stock theme with the newspapers. Garrick went too far, however, when he suffered the libeller Kenrick, not many months after his published attack on Johnson, to exhibit upon his theatre a play called *Falstaff's Wedding*; and to make another attempt, the following season, with a piece called the



*Widowed Wife.* The first was damned, and till Shakespeare's fat Jack is forgotten, is not likely to be heard of again; the second passed into oblivion more slowly: but Garrick was brought, by both, into personal relations with the writer which he lived to have reason to deplore. Meanwhile, and for some little time to come, what Joseph Warton had written was but too true. Garrick and Johnson were entirely off; and in a certain gloom of spirits and inquietude of health which were just now stealing over the latter, even his interest in the stage appeared to have passed away.

'I think, Mr. Johnson,' said Goldsmith, as they sat talking together one evening in February, 'you don't go near the theatres now. You give yourself no more concern about a new play, than if you had never had anything to do with the stage.' Johnson avoided the question, and his friend shifted the subject. He spoke of the public claim and expectation that the author of *Irene* should give them 'something in some other way;' on which Johnson began to talk of making verses, and said (very truly) that the great difficulty was to know when you had made good ones. He remarked that he had once written, in one day, a hundred lines of the *Vanity of Human Wishes*; and turning quickly to Goldsmith, added, 'Doctor, I am not quite idle; I made one line t'other day; but I made no more.' 'Let us hear it,' said the other, laughing; 'we'll put a bad one to it.' 'No, sir,' replied Johnson, 'I have forgot it.'

Boswell was the reporter of this conversation. He had arrived from Paris a few days before, bringing with him Rousseau's old servant maid, Mademoiselle La Vasseur. 'She's very homely and very awkward,' says Hume, 'but more talked about than the Princess of Morocco or the Countess of Egmont; indeed her master's dog, who is no better than a collie, has a name and reputation in the world!' It was enough for Boswell, who clung to any rag of celebrity; nor, remembering how the ancient widow of Cicero and Sallust had seduced a silly young patrician into thinking that her close connection with genius must have given her the secret of it, were Hume and Walpole quite secure of even the honour of the young Scotch escort of the ugly old Frenchwoman. They arrived safely and virtuously notwithstanding; and Boswell straightway went to Johnson, whom, not a little to his discomfort, he found put by his doctors on a water regimen. Though they supped twice at the Mitre, it was not as in the old social time. On the night of the conversation just given, being then on the eve of his return to Scotland, he had taken Goldsmith with him to call again on Johnson, 'with the hope of prevailing on him to sup with us at the Mitre.' But they found him indisposed, and resolved not to go abroad. 'Come then,' said Goldsmith gaily, 'we will not go to the Mitre to-night, since we cannot have the big man with us.' Whereupon the big man, laughing at the jovial Irish phrase, called for a bottle of port; of which, adds Boswell, 'Goldsmith

‘and I partook, while our friend, now a water drinker, sat by us.’

One does not discover, in such anecdotes as these, what honest though somewhat dry Joe Warton calls Goldsmith’s solemn coxcombry. But beside Boswell’s effulgence in that kind, any lesser light could hardly hope to shine. Even to the Great Commoner himself, at whose unapproachable seclusion all London had so lately been amazed, and, who at length, with little abatement of the haughty mystery, had reappeared in the house of commons, was he now resolved, before leaving London, to force his way. Corsican Paoli was the card to play for this mighty Pam; and already he had sent mysterious intimation of certain views of the struggling patriot, of the illustrious Paoli, which he desired to communicate to ‘the prime minister of the brave, the secretary of freedom and of spirit.’ Wonder reigned at the Club when they found the interview granted, and inextinguishable laughter when they heard of the interview itself. Profiting by Rousseau’s Armenian example, Boswell went in Corsican robes. ‘He came in the Corsican dress,’ says Lord Buchan, who was present; ‘and Mr. Pitt smiled; but received him very graciously, in his pompous manner.’ It was an advantage the young Scot followed up; very soon inflicting on Pitt a brief history of himself. He described his general love of great people, and how that Mr. Pitt’s character in particular had filled many of his best hours with what he oddly called ‘that noble admiration which a disinterested

'soul can enjoy in the bower of philosophy.' He told him he was going to publish an account of Corsica, and of Paoli's gallant efforts against the tyrant Genoese. He added that to please his father, 'one of our Scots judges,' he had himself studied law, and was now fairly entered to the bar. And he concluded thus. 'I begin to like it. I can labour hard: I feel myself coming forward: and I hope to be useful to my country. *Could you find time to honour me now and then with a letter?*' To no wiser man than this, it should be always kept in mind, posterity became chiefly indebted for its laugh at Goldsmith's literary vanities, social absurdities, and so-called self-important ways.

With Pitt's re-appearance had meanwhile been connected another event of not less mighty consequence. On the day (the 14th of January) when he rose to support Conway's repeal of the American stamp act, and to resist his accompanying admission that such an act was not void in itself; when, in answer to Nugent's furious denunciation of rebellious colonies, he rejoiced that Massachusetts had resisted, and affirmed that colonies unre-presented could not be taxed by parliament; Burke took his seat, by an arrangement with Lord Verney, for Wendover borough. A fortnight later he made his first speech, and divided the admiration of the house with Pitt himself. Afterward, and with increased effect, he spoke again; Pitt praising him, and telling his friends to set proper value on 'the acquisition they had made:'

and when the struggle for the repeal was over, after the last victorious division on the memorable morning of the 22nd of February, and Pitt and Conway came out amid the huzzas of the crowded lobby, where the leading merchants of the kingdom whom this great question so vitally affected had 'till almost a winter's return of light' tremblingly awaited the decision, Burke stood at their side, and received share of the same shouts and benedictions.

Extraordinary news for the Club, all this; and again the excellent Hawkins is in a state of wonder. 'Sir,' exclaimed Johnson, 'there is no wonder at all. We who 'know Mr. Burke, know that he will be one of the first 'men in the country.' But he had regrets with which to sober this admission. He disliked the Rockingham party, and was zealous for attendance at the Club. 'We 'have the loss of Burke's company,' he complained to Langton, 'since he has been engaged in the public 'business.' Yet he cannot help adding (it was the first letter he had written to Langton from his new study in Johnson's Court, which he thinks 'looks very pretty' about him) that it is well so great a man by nature as Burke, should be expected soon to attain civil greatness. 'He has gained more reputation than perhaps any man at 'his first appearance ever gained before. His speeches 'have filled the town with wonder.'

Ten days after the date of this letter came out an advertisement in the *St. James's Chronicle*, which affected the town with neither wonder nor curiosity, though not

without matter for both to the members of the Club. 'In a few days will be published,' it said, 'in two volumes, twelves, price six shillings bound, or five shillings sewed, *The Vicar of Wakefield*. A tale, supposed to be written by himself. Printed for F. Newbery at the Crown in Paternoster Row.' This was the manuscript story sold to Newbery's nephew fifteen months before; and it seems impossible satisfactorily to account for the bookseller's delay. Johnson says that not till now had the *Traveller's* success made the publication worth while; but eight months were passed, even now, since the *Traveller* had reached its fourth edition. We are left to conjecture; and the most likely supposition will probably be that the delay was consequent on business arrangements between the younger and elder Newbery. Goldsmith had certainly not claimed the interval for any purpose of retouching his work, and can hardly have failed to desire speedy publication for what had been to him a labour of love as rare as the *Traveller* itself. But the elder Newbery may have interposed some claim to a property in the novel, and objected to its appearance contemporaneously with the *Traveller*. He often took part in this way in his nephew's affairs; and thus, for a translation of a French book on philosophy which the nephew published after the *Vicar*, and which Goldsmith at this very time was labouring at, we find, from the summer account handed in by the elder Newbery, that the latter had himself provided the payment. He gave Goldsmith twenty pounds for it; and had also

advanced him, at about the time when the *Vicar* was put in hand (it was printed at Salisbury, and was nearly three months in passing through the press), the sum of eleven guineas on his own promissory note. The impression of a common interest between the booksellers is confirmed by what I find appended to all Mr. Francis Newbery's advertisements of the novel in the various papers of the day ('of whom may be had *The Traveller* or a Prospect 'of Society, a poem by Doctor Goldsmith. Price 1s. 6d.');

and it seems further to strengthen the surmise of Mr. John Newbery's connection with the book, that he is himself niched into it. He is introduced as the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard, who had written so many little books for children ('he called himself their 'friend, but he was the friend of all mankind'); and as having published for the *Vicar* against the Deutero-gamists of the age.

So let him continue to live with the Whistonian controversy; for the good Doctor Primrose, that courageous monogamist, has made both immortal. No book upon record has obtained a wider popularity, and none is more likely to endure. One who on the day of its appearance had not left the nursery, but who grew to be a popular poet and a man of fine wit, and who happily still survives with the experience of the seventy years over which his pleasures of memory extend, remarked lately to the present writer, that, of all the books which, through the fitful changes of three generations, he had seen rise and fall, the charm

of the *Vicar of Wakefield* had alone continued as at first ; and, could he revisit the world after an interval of many more generations, he should as surely look to find it undiminished. Such is the reward of simplicity and truth, and of not overstepping the modesty of nature.

It is not necessary that any critical judgment should be here gone into, of the merits or the defects of this charming tale. Every one is familiar with the *Vicar of Wakefield*. We read it in youth and in age. We return to it, as Walter Scott has said, again and again ; ‘ and we ‘ bless the memory of an author who contrives so well to ‘ reconcile us to human nature.’ With its ease of style, its turns of thought so whimsical yet wise, and the humour and wit which sparkle freshly through its narrative, we have all of us profitably amused the idle or the vacant hour ; from year to year we have had its tender or mirthful incidents, its forms so homely in their beauty, its pathos and its comedy, given back to us from the canvases of our Wilkies, Newtons, and Stothards, our Leslies, Maclises, and Mulreadys : but not in those graces of style, or even in that home-cherished gallery of familiar faces, can the secret of its extraordinary fascination be said to consist. It lies nearer the heart. A something which has found its way *there* ; which, while it amused, has made us happier ; which, gently inweaving itself with our habits of thought, has increased our good humour and charity ; which, insensibly it may be, has corrected wilful impatiences of temper, and made the world’s daily acci-



dents easier and kinder to us all : somewhat thus should be expressed, I think, the charm of the *Vicar of Wakefield*. It is our first pure example of the simple domestic novel. Though wide as it was various, and most minutely as well as broadly marked with passion, incident, and character, the field selected by Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett for the exercise of their genius and display of their powers, had hardly included this. Nor is it likely that Goldsmith would himself have chosen it, if his leading object had been to write a book. Rather as a refuge from the writing of books was this book undertaken. Simple to very baldness are the materials employed. But he threw into the midst of them his own nature; his actual experience; the suffering, discipline, and sweet emotion, of his chequered life; and so made them a lesson and a delight to all men.

Good predominant over evil, is briefly the purpose and moral of the little story. It is designed to show us that patience in suffering, that persevering reliance on the providence of God, that quiet labour, cheerful endeavour, and an indulgent forgiveness of the faults and infirmities of others, are the easy and certain means of pleasure in this world, and of turning pain to noble uses. It is designed to show us that the heroism and self-denial needed for the duties of life, are not of the superhuman sort; that they may co-exist with many follies, with some simple weaknesses, with many harmless vanities; and that in the improvement of mankind, near and remote, in its progress

through worldly content to final happiness, the humblest of men have their place assigned them, and their part allotted them to play.

There had been, in light amusing fiction, no such scene as that where Doctor Primrose, surrounded by the mocking felons of the gaol into which his villainous creditor has thrown him, finds in even those wretched outcasts a common nature to appeal to, minds to instruct, sympathies to bring back to virtue, souls to restore and save. 'In less than a fortnight I had formed them into something social and humane.' Into how many hearts may this have planted a desire which had as yet become no man's care! Not yet had Howard turned his thoughts to the prison, Romilly was but a boy of nine years old, and Elizabeth Fry had not been born. In Goldsmith's day, as for centuries before it, the gaol existed as the gallows' portal: it was crime's high school, where Law presided over the science of law-breaking, and did its best to spread guilt abroad. This prison, says Doctor Primrose, makes men guilty where it does not find them so: 'it encloses wretches for the commission of one crime, and returns them, if returned alive, fitted for the perpetration of thousands.' With what consequence? 'New vices call for fresh restraints; penal laws, which are in the hands of the rich, are laid upon the poor; and all our paltriest sessions are hung round with gibbets.' It scares men now to be told of what no man then took heed. Deliberate murders were committed by the State. It was but

four years after this that the Government which had reduced a young wife to beggary by pressing her husband to sea, sentenced her to death for entering a draper's shop, taking some coarse linen off the counter, and laying it down again as the shopman gazed at her ; listened unmoved to a defence which might have penetrated stone, that inasmuch, since her husband was stolen from her, she had had no bed to lie upon, nothing to clothe her children, nothing to give them to eat, perhaps she might have done something wrong, for she hardly knew what she did ; and finally sent her to Tyburn, with her infant sucking at her breast. Not without reason did Horace Walpole call the country ' one great shambles.' Hardly a Monday passed that was not Black Monday at Newgate. An execution came round as regularly as any other weekly show ; and when it was that ' shocking sight of fifteen men executed,' whereof Boswell makes more than one mention, the interest was of course the greater. Men not otherwise hardened, found here a debasing delight. George Selwyn passed as much time at Tyburn as at White's ; and Mr. Boswell had a special suit of execution black, to make a decent appearance near the scaffold. Not uncalled for, therefore, though solitary and as yet unheeded, was the warning of the good Doctor Primrose. Nay, not uncalled for is it now, though eighty years have passed. Do not, he said, draw the cords of society so hard, that a convulsion must come to burst them ; do not cut away wretches as useless, before you have tried their utility ; make law the protector, not the tyrant of

the people. You will then find that creatures, whose souls are held as dross, want only the hand of a refiner; and that 'very little blood will serve to cement our security.'

Resemblances have been found, and may be admitted to exist, between Charles Primrose and Mr. Abraham Adams. They arose from kindred genius; and from the manly habit which Fielding and Goldsmith shared, of discerning what was good and beautiful in the homeliest aspects of humanity. In the Parson's saddle-bag of sermons would hardly have been found this prison sermon of the Vicar; and there was in Mr. Adams not only a capacity for beef and pudding, but for beating and being beaten, which would ill have consisted with the simple dignity of Doctor Primrose. But unquestionable learning, unsuspecting simplicity, amusing traits of credulity and pedantry, and a most Christian purity and benevolence of heart, are common to both these master-pieces of English fiction; and are in each with such exquisite touch discriminated, as to leave no possible doubt of the originality of either. Anything like the charge of imitation is preposterous. Fielding's friend, Young, sat for the Parson, as in Goldsmith's father, Charles, we have seen the original of the Vicar; and as long as Nature pleases to imitate herself, will such simple-hearted spirits reveal kindred with each other. At the same time, and with peculiar mastery, Art vindicates in such cases her power and skill; and the general truth of resemblance is after all perceived to be much less striking than the local accidents of difference. Does it

not well nigh seem incredible, indeed, comparing the tone of style and incident in the two stories, that a space of twenty years should have comprised *Joseph Andrews* and the *Vicar of Wakefield*?

Little, it must be confessed, had past experience in fiction, from the days of De Foe to these of Smollett, prepared the age for a simple novel of English domestic life. Least of all for that picture, so purely and delicately shaded, of the Vicar, in his character of pastor, of parent, and of husband; of his helpmate, with her motherly cunning and housewifely prudence, 'loving and respecting him, but at the dictates of 'maternal vanity counterplotting his wisest schemes;' of both, with their children around them, their quiet labour and domestic happiness: which Walter Scott declares to be without a parallel, in all his novel-reading, as a fire-side picture of perfect beauty. It may be freely admitted that there are many grave faults, some improbabilities, some even palpable absurdities, in the construction of the story. Goldsmith knew this. 'There are a hundred faults in this 'thing,' he said, in his brief advertisement to it; 'and a 'hundred things might be said to prove them beauties. 'But it is needless.' (His meaning is, that to make beauties out of faults, be the proof ever so successful, does not mend the matter). 'A book may be amusing with 'numerous errors, or it may be very dull without a single 'absurdity.' He rested, with well grounded faith, on the vital reality of his characters. It is wonderful with what nice variety the family likeness of each Primrose is

preserved, and how little the defects of the story interfere with any of them. Cannot one see that there is a propriety, an eternal fitness, in even the historical family picture? Those rosy Flamborough girls, who do nothing but flaunt in red top-knots, hunt the slipper, burn nuts, play tricks, dance country dances, and scream with laughter; who have not the least idea of high life or high-lived company, or such fashionable topics as pictures, taste, Shakespeare, and the musical-glasses: how should it be possible for them to have any other notion or desire than just to be painted in their red top-knots, each holding an orange? But Olivia Primrose! who to her mother's knowledge has a great deal to say upon every subject, and is very well skilled in controversy; who has read Thwackum and Square's disputes in *Tom Jones*, the argument of man Friday and his master in *Robinson Crusoe*, and the dialogues in *Religious Courtship*: is it not somehow quite as much in character with the flighty vivacity of this ambitious little Livy, that she should wish to be drawn as an Amazon sitting upon a bank of flowers, dressed in a green joseph richly laced with gold, a whip in her hand and the young Squire as Alexander the Great lying captive at her feet; as it certainly suits the more sober simplicity and prudent good sense of her sister Sophy, to figure in the same composition as a shepherdess, with as many sheep as the painter can put in for nothing? Mrs. Deborah Primrose triumphing in her lamb's-wool and gooseberry-wine, and claiming to be

represented as the Mother of Love with plenty of diamonds in her hair and stomacher, is at first a little startling : but it admits of an excellent introduction of honest old Dick and chubby little Bill by way of Cupids ; and to what conceivable creature so much in need as Venus of conversion to Monogamy, could the Vicar 'in his gown 'and band' have presented his books on the Whistonian controversy ? There remains only Moses to complete the master-piece ; and is not his 'hat and white feather' typical of both his arguments and his bargains, his sale of Dobbins the colt and his purchase of the gross of green spectacles ? The simple, credulous, generous, inoffensive family habits, are common to all ; but in each a separate identity is yet as broadly marked, as in the Amazon, the Venus, or the Shepherdess, of the immortal family picture.

Still, from all that touches and diverts us in these harmless vanities of the delightful group, we return to the primal source of what has given this glorious little story its unequalled popularity. It is not simply that a happy fireside is depicted there, but that it is one over which calamity and sorrow can only cast the most temporary shade. In his deepest distress, the Vicar has but to remember how much kinder Heaven is to us than we are to ourselves, and how few are the misfortunes of Nature's making, to recover his cheerful patience. There never was a book in which indulgence and charity made virtue look so lustrous. Nobody is straight-laced : if we except Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs, whose pretensions are summed up

in Burchell's noble monosyllable. 'Virtue, my dear Lady 'Blarney, virtue is worth any price; but where is that to 'be found?' '*Fudge.*' When worldly reverses visit the good Doctor Primrose, they are of less account than the equanimity they cannot deprive him of; than the belief in good to which they only give wider scope; than the happiness which even in its worldliest sense they ultimately strengthen, by enlarged activity, and increased necessity for labour. It is only when struck through the sides of his children, that for an instant his faith gives way. Most lovely is the pathos of that scene; so briefly and beautifully told. The little family at night are gathered round a charming fire, telling stories of the past, laying schemes for the future, and listening to Moses's thoughtful opinion of matters and things in general, to the effect that all things, in his judgment, go on very well, and that he has just been thinking, when sister Livy is married to Farmer Williams they'll get the loan of his cyder press and brewing-tubs for nothing. The best gooseberry-wine has been this night much in request. 'Let us have one 'bottle more, Deborah, my life,' says the Vicar; 'and 'Moses, give us a good song. But where is my darling 'Olivia?' Little Dick comes running in. 'O papa, 'papa, she is gone from us, she is gone from us, my 'sister Livy is gone from us for ever!' 'Gone, child!' 'Yes, she is gone off with two gentlemen in a post-chaise, 'and one of them kissed her, and said he would die for 'her; and she cried very much, and was for coming back;



‘but he persuaded her again, and she went into the chaise, and said, *O what will my poor papa do when he knows I am undone!*’ ‘Now then, my children, go and be miserable; for we shall never enjoy one hour more;’ and the old man, struck to the heart, cannot help cursing the seducer. But Moses is mindful of happier teaching, and with a loving simplicity rebukes his father. ‘You should be my mother’s comforter, sir, and you increase her pain. You should not have curst him, villain as he is.’ ‘I did not curse him, child, did I?’ ‘Indeed, sir, you did; you curst him twice.’ ‘Then may Heaven forgive me and him if I did.’ Charity resumes its place in his heart; with forgiveness, happiness half visits him again; by kindly patience, even Deborah’s reproaches are subdued and stayed; he takes back with most affecting tenderness his penitent child; and the voices of all his children are heard once more in their simple concert on the honey-suckle bank. We feel that it is better than cursing; and are even content that the rascally young Squire should have time and hope for a sort of shabby repentance, and be allowed the intermediate comfort (it seems after all, one hardly knows why or wherefore, the most appropriate thing he can do) of ‘blowing the French horn.’ Mr. Abraham Adams has infinite claims on respect and love, nor ever to be forgotten are his groans over Wilson’s worldly narrative, his sermon on vanity, his manuscript Æschylus, his noble independence to Lady Booby, and his grand rebuke to Peter Pounce: but he is

put to no such trial as this which has been illustrated here, and which sets before us, with such blended grandeur, simplicity, and pathos, the Christian heroism of the loving father, and forgiving ambassador of God to man.

It was not an age of particular earnestness, this Hume and Walpole age : but no one can be in earnest himself without in some degree affecting others. ' I remember a passage in the *Vicar of Wakefield*,' said Johnson, a few years after its author's death, ' which Goldsmith was afterwards fool enough to expunge. *I do not love a man who is zealous for nothing.*' The words were little, since the feeling was retained ; for the very basis of the little tale was a sincerity and zeal for many things. This indeed it was, which, while all the world were admiring it for its mirth and sweetness, its bright and happy pictures, its simultaneous movement of the springs of laughter and tears, gave it a rarer value to a more select audience, and connected it with not the least memorable anecdote of modern literary history. It had been published little more than four years, when two Germans whose names became afterwards world-famous, one a student at that time in his twentieth, the other a graduate in his twenty-fifth year, met in the city of Strasburg. The younger, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, a law-scholar of the University with a passion for literature, sought knowledge from the elder, Johann Gottfried Herder, for the course on which he was moved to enter. Herder, a severe and masterly though somewhat cynical critic, laughed at the likings of

the young aspirant, and roused him to other aspiration. Producing a German translation of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, he read it out aloud to Goethe in a manner which was peculiar to him; and as the incidents of the little story came forth in his serious simple voice, in one unmoved unaltering tone ('just as if nothing of it was present before him, but all was only historical; as if the shadows of this poetic creation did not affect him in a life-like manner, but only glided gently by'), a new ideal of letters and of life arose in the mind of the listener. Years passed on; and while that younger student raised up and re-established the literature of his country, and came at last, in his prime and in his age, to be acknowledged for the wisest of modern men, he never ceased throughout to confess what he owed to those old evenings at Strasburg. The strength which can conquer circumstance; the happy wisdom of irony which elevates itself above every object, above fortune and misfortune, good and evil, death and life, and attains to the possession of a poetical world; first visited Goethe in the tone with which Goldsmith's tale is told. The fiction became to him life's first reality; in country clergymen of Drusenheim there started up Vicars of Wakefield; for Olivias and Sophias of Alsace, first love fluttered at his heart; and at every stage of his illustrious after-career, its impression still vividly recurred to him. He remembered it, when, at the height of his worldly honour and success, he made his written *Life* ('Wahrheit und Dichtung') record what a blessing it had been to him; he had not

forgotten it, when, some seventeen years ago, standing, at the age of eighty-one, on the very brink of the grave, he told a friend that in the decisive moment of mental development the *Vicar of Wakefield* had formed his education, and that he had lately, with unabated delight, 'read the charming book again from beginning to end, 'not a little affected by the lively recollection' how much he had been indebted to the author seventy years before.

Goldsmith was unconscious of this exalted tribute. He died as ignorant of Herder's friendly criticism, as of the gratitude of Goethe. The little book silently forced its way. No noise was made about it, no trumpets were blown for it. The *St. James' Chronicle* did not condescend to notice its appearance. It was left to the patronage of *Lloyd's Evening Post*, the *London Chronicle*, and papers of that class; which simply informed their readers that a new novel, called the *Vicar of Wakefield*, had been published, that 'the Editor is Doctor Goldsmith, who has 'affixed his name to an introductory advertisement,' and that such and such were the incidents of the story. Several columns of the *Evening Post* and the *Chronicle*, between the dates of March and April, were filled in this way with bald recital of the plot; and with such extracts as the prison scene, the account of the Primroses, and the brief episode of Matilda: but in the way of praise or of criticism, not a word was said. Johnson, as I have remarked, took little interest in it at any time but as the means of getting so much money for its author; and believing that

'Harry Fielden' (as he called him) knew nothing but the shell of life, may be excused for thinking the *Vicar* a 'mere fanciful performance.' It would seem that none of the Club, indeed, excepting Burke, cared much about it : and one may read, in the French letters of the time, how perfectly Madame Riccoboni agrees with her friend Garrick as to the little to be learned from it ; and how surprised the lively lady is that the Burkes should have found it pathetic, or be able to approve of its arguments in favour of thieves and outcasts. Admiration, nevertheless, gathered slowly and steadily round it ; a second edition appeared on the 5th of June, and a third on the 25th of August ; it reached its sixth edition in the year of its writer's death ; and he had lived to see it translated into several continental languages, though not to receive from the booksellers the least addition to that original sorry payment, which even Johnson thought 'accidentally' less than it ought to have been. In the very month when the second edition was issued, a bill which he had drawn upon Newbery, for fifteen guineas, was returned dishonoured.

He had his accustomed resource, and went uncomplainingly to the old drudgery. Payne the bookseller gave him ten guineas for compiling a duodecimo volume of '*Poems for Young Ladies*. In three parts : Devotional, 'Moral, and Entertaining.' It was a respectable selection of pieces, chiefly from Parnell, Pope, Thomson, Addison, and Collins ; with additions of less importance from less eminent hands, and some of the occasional verses of his

friend Robert Nugent. It has been supposed to have been in this book 'for young ladies' that two objectionable pieces by Prior were inserted; but the statement, though sanctioned by Doctor Percy, is incorrect. It was in a more extensive selection of *Beauties of English Poesy*, published in the following year, and for the compilation of which Griffin the bookseller gave him fifty pounds, that he made that questionable choice of the 'Ladle' and 'Hans Carvel,' which for once interdicted from general reading a book with his name upon its title-page. It was unlucky: for the selection in other respects, making allowance for a limited acquaintance with the earlier English poets, was a good one; and in this, as well as its preface and brief notices of the pieces quoted, not undeserving of what he claimed generally on behalf of books of the kind as entitling them to fair reward. 'Judgment,' he said, 'is to be paid for in such selections; and a man 'may be twenty years of his life cultivating this judgment.' But he has also, with its help, to be mindful of changes in the public taste, to which he may himself have contributed. Nothing more frequent than these; few things so sudden. Staid wives will shrink with abhorrence in their fortieth autumn, from what they read with delight in their twentieth summer; and it was now even less than twenty years since that faultless 'family expositor,' Doctor Doddridge (as we learn from the letters of the holy divine), thought it no sin to read the *Wife of Bath's Prologue* to young Nancy Moore, and take his share in the laugh

it raised. Doctor Johnson himself had not forgotten these ways of his youth ; and amazed Boswell, some ten years later, by asserting that *Prior* was a lady's book, and that no lady was ashamed to have it standing in her library.

The Doctor could hardly have taken part in the present luckless selection, however, for through all the summer and autumn months of the year he had withdrawn from his old haunts and friends, and taken refuge at the Thrales'. For the latter, happening to visit him in Johnson's Court one day at the close of spring, found him on his knees in such a passion of morbid melancholy, beseeching God to continue to him the use of his understanding, and proclaiming such sins of which he supposed himself guilty, that poor sober solid Thrale was fain to 'lift up one hand to shut his mouth,' and the worthy pair bore him off, by a sort of kindly force, to their hospitable home. With cheerfulness, health returned after some few months ; and Johnson from that time, says Murphy, became almost resident in the family. 'He went occasionally to the Club in Gerrard Street, but his head 'quarters were fixed at Streatham.' Goldsmith had rightly foreseen how ill things were going with him, when not even a new play could induce him to attend the theatre.

In his own attendance at the theatre he was just now more zealous than ever, and had doubtless 'assisted' at some recent memorable nights there. When all the world went to see Rousseau, for example, including the king and queen ; when their majesties, though Garrick exhibited all

his powers in *Lusignan* and *Lord Chalkstone*, looked more at the philosopher than the player; and when poor Mrs. Garrick who had exalted him on a seat in her box (rewarded for her pains by his laughing at *Lusignan* and crying at *Lord Chalkstone*, not understanding a word of either), held him back by the skirts of his coat all night, in continual terror that he would tumble over the front of the box into the pit, from his eager anxiety to show himself; Goldsmith could hardly have stayed away. Nor is he likely to have been absent when the Drury Lane players (with many of whom, especially Mr. and Mrs. Yates, he had now formed acquaintance) made the great rally for their rival fund; and in defiance of his outlawry, Wilkes unexpectedly showed himself in the theatre, more bent on seeing Garrick's *Kitely* than keeping faith with the ministry, to whom, through Burke, he had the day before promised to go back to Paris more secretly and quickly than he had come to London. Least of all could Goldsmith have been absent when the last new comedy was played, of which all the town was talking still; and which seems to have this year turned his thoughts for the first time to the theatre, with serious intention to try his own fortune there.

The *Clandestine Marriage*, the great success of the year, and for the strength and variety of its character deservedly so, had been the joint work of Colman and Garrick; whose respective shares in its authorship have been much disputed, but now seem clear and ascertainable



enough. The idea of the comedy originated with Colman, as he was looking at the first plate in Hogarth's immortal series of *Marriage à la Mode*; but he admits that it was Garrick who, on being taken into counsel, suggested the important alteration of Hogarth's 'proud lord' into an amiable old ruin of a fop, descending to pin his noble decayed skirts to the frock of a tradesman's daughter, but still aspiring to the hopes and submitting to the toils of conquest, which gave to the stage its favourite *Lord Ogleby*. These leading ideas determined on, rough hints for the construction and conduct of the plot, of which Colman's was made public by his son, and Garrick's did not see the light till the other day, were exchanged between the friends: and from these it is manifest that, in addition to what Colman in his letters somewhat scantily admits to have been Garrick's contributions; namely, the first suggestion of *Lord Ogleby*, his opening levee scene, and the fifth act which he closes with such handsome gallantry; the practised actor had mapped out more clearly than Colman, though he may not have written, the other principal scenes in which his chosen character was concerned. What he submitted for the interview where the antiquated fop supposes *Fanny* to have fallen in love with him, will not only exhibit this, but hereafter help us to understand some disagreements between himself and Goldsmith. 'Pope,' he remarks, putting the actor always in place of the character, 'resolves to open her heart to Garrick, and try to bring him over to forgive them.'

‘ O’Brien consents, and leaves her upon seeing Garrick  
‘ come smiling along. Enter Garrick. He smiling and  
‘ taking every word from the girl as love to himself, she  
‘ hesitates ; falters ; which confirms him more and more :  
‘ till at last she is obliged to go off abruptly, and dare not  
‘ discover what she intended ; which is now demonstrative  
‘ to Garrick, who is left alone, and may show himself in  
‘ all the glory of his character in a soliloquy of vanity.  
‘ He resolves to have the girl, and break the hearts of the  
‘ rest of the female world.’ Powell had to replace O’Brien,  
however, and King was substituted for Garrick, before the  
play was acted ; and out of the latter circumstance arose a  
coolness between the friends which will reappear in this nar-  
rative. Colman thought Garrick’s surrender of *Lord Ogleby*  
a capricious forfeiture of promise ; but though an exception  
to his previous withdrawal from all new parts was at first  
intended in this case, he exercised a sound discretion in  
changing that purpose. The new character was, in truth,  
little more than an enrichment of one of his own farces,  
assisted by a farce of his friend Townley’s ; and he could  
himself but have made *Lord Ogleby* an improved *Lord*  
*Chalkstone*. It was better left to an entirely new repre-  
sentative, and King justified his choice. Colman’s sense  
of injury was, nevertheless, kept carefully alive by good-  
natured friends ; and when Garrick, some time after the  
play’s production, and while the town were still crowd-  
ing to see it, wrote in triumph to his coadjutor of the dif-  
ficulties of the rival house (‘ The ministry all to pieces !

'Pitt, they say, and a new arrangement. Beard and Co. going positively to sell their patent for sixty thousand pounds. 'Tis true; but, mum. We have not yet discovered the purchasers. When I know, you shall hear: there will be the devil to do'), he little imagined what notions he was then infusing into Colman's busy discontented brain.

The unexampled success of their comedy had seemed in truth to have as thoroughly reconciled them, as it had unsettled poor Goldsmith's thoughts, and driven them in the direction of the stage. It was not unnatural. The reputation of his later writings, bringing him into occasional better company, had tempted him to habits of greater expense, while it failed of the means to keep pace with them. His accounts with Newbery were growing more and more involved; an unpaid note for fifty pounds, which he had given in settlement three years ago, began to make threatening re-appearance; his last draft upon the not unfriendly but cautious bookseller, though for only eleven guineas, had been dishonoured; and ordinary modes of extrication seemed more difficult and distant than ever. There was hope in the theatre. Anxiety and pain he knew there would also be; but was not indisposed to risk them. They could never wholly obscure the brighter side. No longer might the Playhouse be called the sole seat of wit; nor could it any more be said, as in Steele's days, to bear as important relation to the manners as the Bank to the credit of the nation: but beside the tempting profits of an 'author's night,' which, with any reasonable success,

could hardly average less than from three to four hundred pounds, there was nothing to make the town half so fond of a man, even yet, as a successful play. It had been the dream, too, of his own earliest ambition; and though his tragedy had gone the way of dreams, he had now a surer and not untried ground to build upon, of humour, character, and wit. He resolved to attempt a comedy.

What, meanwhile, his leisure amusements were, since Johnson's withdrawal to the Thrales had limited their intercourse even at Gerrard Street, may be worth illustrating by occasional little anecdotes of the time, though rather loosely told. He had joined a card club, at the Devil tavern, near Temple Bar, where very moderate whist was played; and where the members seem to have occupied the intervals of their favourite game with practical jokes upon himself. He gave a guinea instead of a shilling, one night, to the driver of a coach (after dining with Tom Davies); and the following night a fictitious coachman presented himself to restore as counterfeit a guinea. It was a trick to prove that not even the honesty of a hackney coachman would be too startling a trial for Goldsmith's credulity; and, as anticipated, the gilded coin was taken with an overflow of simple thanks, and subsequent more solid acknowledgment of the supposed marvellous honesty. Other incidents tell the same tale of unsuspecting odd simplicity. Doctor Sleigh of Cork had asked him to be kind to a young Irish law student, who had taken chambers near his own; known afterwards

as a writer for the newspapers, Foote's biographer, and, from the title of a poem he published, *Conversation Cooke*; and the latter, invited to apply to him in case of need, was told with earnest regrets one day, in answer to some trifling application, that he was really not at that moment in possession of a guinea. The youth turned away in distrust, but in less distress than Goldsmith; and returning late to his own chambers that night, found a difficulty in getting in. Goldsmith had meanwhile himself borrowed the money, and thrust it, wrapped up in paper, half underneath the door. Cooke hurried next day to thank him, and tell him what a mercy it was somebody else had not laid hold of it. 'In truth, my dear fellow,' said Goldsmith, 'I did not think of that.' As little did he trouble himself to think, when a French adventurer went to him towards the close of the year with proposals for a *History of England in French*, which was not only to be completed in fifteen volumes at the cost of seven guineas and a half, and to be paid for in advance, but to have the effect of bringing into more friendly relations the men of letters of both countries. Goldsmith, though he had been fain but a few days before this, for the humble payment of two guineas, to write Newbery a 'Preface to *Wiseman's Grammar*,' had no mean notion of the dignity of literature in regard to such proposals as the *Frenchman's*, and now indulged it at a thoughtless cost. Straightway he gave his name, impoverished himself by giving his last available guinea, and in the *Chevalier's*

advertisements, jostling the names of crowned heads and ambassadors, figured as the 'Author of the *Traveller*.' Pleasanter are the anecdotes which tell of his love for the young, and anxiety to have them for his readers. It was matter of pride to one with as gentle a spirit and a heart as wise as his own, the late Charles Lamb, to remember that the old woman who taught him his letters, had in her own school girl days been patted on the head by Goldsmith. Visiting where she stayed one day, he found her reading the *Poems for Young Ladies*, praised her fondness for poetry, and sent her his own poem to encourage it. The son of Hoole, Ariosto's translator, remembered a similar incident in his father's house. Other amusing traits might be added, strongly resembling these. Booksellers would get him to recommend books, misguiding him as to the grounds of recommendation; and when everybody was laughing at the exaggerated accounts of Patagonians nine feet high, brought home by Commodore Byron's party, Goldsmith earnestly protested that he had talked with the carpenter of the commodore's ship (a 'sensible, understanding man, and I believe extremely 'faithful'), and by him had been assured, in the most solemn manner, of the truth of the relation. Nor was it altogether romance, though the honest carpenter made the most of what he had seen.

The eleventh year of Goldsmith's London struggle was now coming to a close, amid strange excitement and change. What Garrick had reported of the ministry in

the summer was in the main correct. Though it had not broken to pieces, the king had exploded it; and there was Pitt and a new 'arrangement.' The word was not ill chosen. Changes of ministry were now brought about without the conflict of principles or party, and by no better means than might be used for 'arrangement' of the royal bedchamber. Lord Rockingham had hardly taken office when the Duke of Cumberland's death left him defenceless against palace intrigues; and their busy fomentors, the 'king's friends' whom Burke has gibbeted in his *Thoughts on Discontents*, very speedily destroyed him. His Stamp Act repeal bill, his America trading bill, his resolution against General Warrants, and his Seizure of Papers' bill, were the signal for royal favour to every creeping placeman who opposed them; and on the failure of the latter bill Grafton threw up his office, saying Pitt alone could save them. Pitt's fame as well as peace would have profited, had he consented to do that. But against his better self, the king's appeals had enlisted his pride; and he had not strength, amid failing health, to conquer the impulse of vanity. He alone of all men, he was told, could rally the people, reunite the nobles, and save the throne; he alone, the king wrote to him, could 'destroy all party distinctions, and restore that subordination to government which alone can preserve that inestimable blessing, liberty, from degenerating into licentiousness.' A wise thing, if it could have been accomplished; but a thing that was never even seriously

intended. It is to be kept in view, throughout this miserable conflict, that the system of which George the Third and Lord Bute were the inventors and Bubb Dodington the apostle, was no alliance of the throne with the people, but subordination of everything, including the great houses, to the throne: that for party, the king would have substituted prerogative; for faction, despotism; for occasional corruption of the house of commons, its entire extinction as an independent house; and, for the partial evils of a system which bound men firmly together for general public purposes, though it strengthened them sometimes for particular selfish ends, the universal treachery and falsehood of a band of reptile parasites, acknowledging no allegiance but at the palace and no service but the king's. No man better than Pitt should have known this; yet in an evil hour he consented to be prime minister, and to name himself Earl of Chatham. Rockingham retired, with hands as clean as when he entered office; without having bribed to get power, or intrigued to keep it; without asking for honour, place, or pension, for any of his friends; and with that phalanx of friends unbroken. He was then, and for some years later, the only minister since the king's accession, with whom Bute had not secretly tampered, or whom the favourite had publicly opposed; and the one great fault of his administration had sprung from a pedantry of honour. He thought that, in taxing America, the legislature had committed an act of impolicy and wrong; but he could not bring himself to think that that



legislative power of the empire was not supreme over the colonies within its rule, and that it was not *able* to tax America, as to commit any other as mad injustice. Surely, however, the very act to repeal the wrong acknowledged sufficiently the power to commit it; and to superadd a declaration of the power, was to invite its future reassertion. It might be true; but it was galling, and not necessary. It was, in the same breath, an assertion of strength with a confession of weakness; and unwisely halted half-way between conciliation and a threat. Nor did anything so much as this give George Grenville his future strength in opposition, when, with his dogged yet solid and vigorous eloquence, he continued to maintain that there was no middle course between enforcing submission or acknowledging independence. Upon this question therefore it had been that the great Chief Justice Pratt, who enjoyed Pitt's chosen confidence, and whom Rockingham had on that ground singled out for elevation to an earldom, used the privilege so generously given, resolutely to oppose the giver. The example was one, on the part of both minister and opponent, by which Pitt might of late have profited; but his noble nature had become clouded for a time. To many proffers from Lord Rockingham to serve with him, to accept him even as a leader, the only answer vouchsafed by Pitt had been a studied slight; and the only return made by Chatham was an attempt to separate the party from its chief. This was steadily resisted. Savile, Dowdeswell, Lord John

Cavendish, the Duke of Richmond, the Duke of Portland, Fitzherbert, and Charles Yorke (Burke could only refuse future office, he had none to resign), persisted in resigning office; and the only important members of the late administration who remained, were the two whom Cumberland had induced to join it, General Conway (with whom William Burke remained as under secretary) and the Duke of Grafton. With these, though strongly opposed in views as well as temper, were now associated two men of remarkable talents, personal adherents of Chatham; Lord Camden as Chancellor, and Lord Shelburne as a Secretary of State: the latter a young but not untried statesman; nor alone distinguished for political ability, but also for such rare tastes and original independence of character, that men of science and letters, such men as even Goldsmith, had come to regard him as a friend. The next ingredient in the strange compound was Charles Townshend, at once perhaps the cleverest and certainly the most dangerous man in the whole kingdom. He was made Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the lead of the house of commons. His opinions no man knew; they were simply the opinions of the house of commons. He had with equal ability advocated every possible opinion; as the majority had with equal impartiality voted. Burke called him the child of the house; and said he never thought, did, or spoke anything, but with a view to it: that he adapted himself to its disposition every day, and adjusted himself before it as a looking glass. Certainly no man, for his brief reign, was

ever so popular in it ; or so nearly approached itself in the extravagance of his inconsistencies. The light of his ascending star is compared, by no partial witness, to the majesty of Pitt's descending glory ; nor does it seem doubtful that his later influence in debate transcended even the great commoner's. But a man is not remembered in history for his mere predominance in the house of commons ; and he who exactly suits that audience, and 'hits the 'house between wind and water,' may be found to have lost a nobler hearing, and to have missed much worthier aims. Little spoken of, indeed, as Charles Townshend now is, it seems necessary to call to mind, when any modern writer pauses at his once famous name, that as well in the copious abundance of his faults as the wonderful brilliancy of his parts he had far outstripped competition ; and must have ranked even beyond his contemporaries for the most knowing man of their age, but for his ignorance of 'common truth, common sincerity, common honesty, common modesty, common steadiness, common courage, and common sense.' Wanting these qualities, and having every other in surprising abundance, he most thoroughly completed the charm of powerful trouble which Chatham was now preparing ; and in which every shade of patriot and courtier, king's friend and republican, tory and whig, treacherous ally and open enemy, were at length most ingeniously united. Nobody knew each other in this memorable cabinet, and every body hated each other. Soon did even its

author turn sullenly away from the monstrous prodigy he had created, and leave it to work its mischief unrestrained.

Poor Conway first took the alarm, and got Grafton to urge the necessity of having some one in the lower house, on whom real reliance could be placed. There will be 'a strong phalanx of able personages against us,' he said; 'and among those whom Mr. Conway wishes to see support him, is Mr. Burke, the readiest man on all points perhaps in the whole house.' Burke had been a member little more than six months when this was written; yet even among the men who thus felt his usefulness, there was as little idea of recognising his claim to an office of any importance, as of offering to make him prime minister. His own wish had been, as soon as it became certain that the Rockinghams must resign, to obtain an office which happened then to be vacant, and to have held which, however quickly surrendered, would have increased his parliamentary consideration; but he failed in the attempt, and was styled, by the vehement Bishop of Chester, nothing short of a 'madman' to have made it. 'Here is an Irishman' wrote General Lee in the following month to the Prince Royal of Poland, 'sprung up in the house of commons, who has astonished every body by the power of his eloquence, and his comprehensive knowledge in all our exterior and internal politics, and commercial interests. He wants nothing but that sort of dignity annexed to rank and property in England, to make him the most considerable man in the lower

‘house.’ Wanting that, however, he wanted all, so far as office was concerned. Well might Walpole say that the narrowness of his fortune kept him down. The great families disowned him. Not many weeks after this letter was written, the amiable Conway himself (from whose service, greatly to his honour, William Burke soon afterwards retired, and was replaced by David Hume), irritated by his predominance, jeered at him in public debate as ‘an Irish adventurer:’ though, within a month, seventy-seven Lancaster merchants had publicly thanked him for his strenuous efforts to relieve the burdens on trade and commerce; and Grafton had even gone so far as to urge upon Chatham, that ‘he looked upon it he was a most material man to gain’ even at the price of some office a trifle higher than that of a lordship at the Board of Trade. The attempt was made, and failed; and it was well that it did so. It was well that when America again was taxed, Burke should have been free to enter his protest against it; that when the public liberties were again invaded, Burke should have had the power to defend them; that when the elective franchise was trampled under foot, and five several free elections were counted void, Burke, amidst even some defection of his friends, should have had the freedom, as he had the courage, to proclaim the constitution violated, and allegiance endangered; that when Townshend began to make public ridicule of his colleagues, and raise the laugh of the house of commons against the Graftons and Conways, Burke should have met him with a wit as keen as his own, and a laugh more likely to

endure ; and that throughout those counter-intrigues into which the palace intrigues now drove the great families, which would have shamed the morality of the highway, and which engaged the three 'gangs' of the Bedfords, the Temple-Grenvilles, and the Court, in a profligate and desperate conflict of venality, rapacity, and falsehood, Burke and the Rockinghams should have held aloof, and escaped contamination of the baseness that so rode at the top of the world.

What chance had quiet or lofty literature amid such scenes as these ? What hope of hearing or consideration could fall to its professors from the class that should have led the nation ? What possibility of reward for having dignified their calling, and snatched it from the servitude it had so long lain under ? By such labours as Johnson's had been, and as Goldsmith's continued to be, they had provided for another generation of writers, if not for themselves, surer friends and better paymasters than either patron or publisher ; nor was it possible for men of letters again to become, what Robert Walpole made and would have kept them. Never again with abject servility, as Goldsmith pithily expresses it, could they

" importune his Grace,  
Nor ever cringe to men in place,  
Nor undertake a dirty job,  
Nor draw the quill to write for Bob ;"

but what had been the effect of the change on Walpole's successors, the ministers and governors of the nation ? Had they stooped to pick up the hack livery

which the Goldsmiths had flung down, and put it on to serve themselves? It seemed so. No other interest did they appear to take in the condition or the uses of literature. To them it had become but one vast engine of libel, available only for the sordid trafficking, the shameless corruption, the servile submission, which in turn ruled all the factions. George Grenville had used it to assail Conway and the Rockinghams; two new-made deans resorted to it to uphold their patron Grafton; parson Scott had made a firebrand of it, to fling destruction at the enemies of Sandwich; Lord Temple had not scrupled to employ it for the purpose of blackening his brother and his brother-in-law; and it had helped the unblushing Rigby to show, by jovial abuse of everybody all round, how entirely and exclusively he was his Grace the Duke of Bedford's, her Grace the Duchess's, and the whole House of Woburn's. Every month, every week, had its periodical calumny. The unwieldy column of quarto and octavo, the light squadron of pamphlet and flying sheet, alike kept up the fire. 'Politics and abuse,' confesses one who stood behind the scenes, 'have totally corrupted our taste. Nobody thinks of writing a line 'that is to last beyond the next fortnight;' or of listening to a line so written. A politician and man of rank left an account of the literature of the day, in which half a line is given to Goldsmith as 'the correct author of the *Traveller*,' another to Smollett as a profligate hireling and abusive Jacobite writer, and a third to Johnson as a lumber of

mean opinions and prostituted learning: but in which Mrs. Macaulay's history is compared to Robertson's, Mr. Richard Bentley's *Patriotism* thought next in merit to the *Dunciad*, and Mr. Dalrymple's *Rodondo* counted hardly inferior to *Hudibras*; in which Mr. Hoole is discovered to be a poet, and an elegant five shilling quarto which had appeared within the last few months with the title of the *New Bath Guide*, is proclaimed to have distinguished and marked out its writer from all other men, for possession of the easiest wit, the most genuine humour, the most inoffensive satire, the most unaffected poetry, and the most harmonious melody in every kind of metre. Is not the fashion as well as faction of the time thus reflected to us vividly? Now, all excepting Christopher Anstey are forgotten, of these admired ones; nor is it likely that even Anstey would have been noticed with anything but a sneer, if, besides being a scholar and a wit, he had not also been a member of parliament. Beyond the benches of the houses, too, or the gossip of St. James's, this influence reached. It was social rank that had helped Anstey for this poem of the *New Bath Guide* to no less a sum than two hundred pounds; it was because Goldsmith had no other rank than as a man of letters, depressed and at that time very slowly rising, that his *Traveller* had obtained for him only twenty guineas. Even David Hume, though now accepted into the higher circles, undisturbed any longer by the 'factious barbarians,' and somewhat purified of late from



history and philosophy by employment as under-secretary of state, had not lost that painful sense of the social differences between Paris and London which he expressed twelve months before the present date. 'If a man have the misfortune in London to attach himself to letters, even if he succeeds, I know not with whom he is to live, nor how he is to pass his time in a suitable society. The little company there, that is worth conversing with, are cold and unsociable, or are warmed only by faction and cabal; so that a man who plays no part in public affairs becomes altogether insignificant; and if he is not rich, he becomes even contemptible. But in Paris a man that distinguishes himself in letters, meets immediately with regard and attention.' 'The best company here in London,' he complains in another letter 'are in a flame of politics. Men of letters are sunk and forgot in the general torrent of the world.' Only one such man there was who would *not* be so sunk and forgot; his own unluckily chosen protégé Rousseau. That horrible English habit of indifference, Jean Jacques conceived to be a conspiracy to destroy him (for how could he live without being talked about); and so straightway resolving to make fight against it, surrendered, on the instant, all claim to be considered a Socrates, and, in the self-same judgment which not a year before had thus honourably characterised him, and had praised his mildness, modesty, gentleness, and good-nature, became a compound of 'whim, affectation, wickedness, vanity, ferocity,

'and lying,' as well as 'the blackest and most atrocious villain beyond comparison that now exists in the world.' For he had first indicted Hume as the leader of the conspiracy, and brought him forward to answer the indictment in the *St. James' Chronicle*; and had next fallen foul of Horace Walpole as Hume's vicious instrument, Bishop Warburton crying out with delight to see 'so seraphic a madman' attack 'so insufferable a coxcomb.' Nothing of a literary sort, indeed, made so much noise or amusement at the close of the year as these mad libels of Rousseau, and the caricatures made of them: unless it were the newspaper cross readings, which, with the witty signature of *Papyrius Cursor*, Caleb Whitefoord published in December (wherein the public were informed that 'this morning the Rt. Hon. 'the Speaker was convicted of keeping a disorderly 'house,' that 'Lord Chatham took his seat and was 'severely handled by the populace,' with other as surprising items of information), and at which the whole town is described to have wept with laughter. Goldsmith envied nothing so much, we are assured, as the authorship of this humorous sally; and would gladly have exchanged for it his own most successful writings. Half sad, and half satirical, perhaps he thus contrasted its reception with their's.

The young German student to whom allusion has been made, speaking from his judgment of the book that so enchanted him, had thought its author must have reason 'thankfully to acknowledge he was an Englishman, and to

'reckon highly the advantages which his country and 'nation afforded him.' But would Goethe without limitation have said this, if there had lain before him the two entries from Newbery's papers wherewith the biographer of the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield* must close the year 1766 and open the year 1767? 'Received from Mr. Newbery,' says the first, dated the 28th of December, 'five guineas for writing a short 'English grammar. OLIVER GOLDSMITH.' 'To cash,' says the second, dated the 6th of January, 'lent Doctor 'Goldsmith one pound one.'

Thus scantily eking out his necessities with hack employment and parsimonious lendings, his dramatic labour was meanwhile in progress. He had taken for his model the older English comedy. He thought Congreve's astonishing wit too exuberant for the stage; and for truth to nature, vivacity, life, and spirit, placed Farquhar first. With what was called the genteel or sentimental school that had since prevailed, and of which Steele was the originator, he felt no sympathy; and cared chiefly for the *Jealous Wife* and *Clandestine Marriage* because they had shown the power to break those trammels. What his countryman Farquhar had done, he resolved to attempt; and in that hearty hope had planned his play. With the help of nature, humour, and character, should these be in his reach, he would invoke the spirit of laughter, happy, unrestrained, and cordial; all the more surely, as he reckoned, if with Garrick's help, and King's, and

Yates's : though without them, if so compelled. For not in their names, or after Garrick's fashion, had he set down his exits and entrances, nor to suit peculiarities of their's were his mirthful incidents devised. Upon no stage picture of the humourous, however vivid, but upon what he had seen and known, himself, of the humourous in actual life, he was determined to venture all ; believing that what was real in manners, however broad or low, if in decency endurable and pointing to no illiberal moral, could never justly be condemned as vulgar. And for this he had Johnson's approval. Indifferent to nothing that affected his friend, nor ever sluggish where help was wanted or active kindness needed to be done, Johnson promised to write a prologue to the comedy. For again had he lately shown himself in Gerrard Street ; again had the Club reunited its members ; and once more in the society of Reynolds, Johnson, and Burke, was Goldsmith cager to forget his carking poverty, and count up his growing pretensions to greatness and esteem.

What Boswell calls 'one of the most remarkable incidents of Johnson's life,' was now matter of conversation at the Club. In February, the king had taken occasion to see and hold some conversation with him on one of his visits to the royal library, where by permission of the librarian he frequently consulted books. The effect produced by the incident is a social curiosity of the time. Endless was the interest of it ; the marvel of it never to be done with. 'He loved to relate it with all its circumstances,' says Boswell, 'when requested by his friends : ' and 'Come

‘now, sir, this is an interesting matter; do favour us with ‘it,’ was the cry of every friend in turn. So, often was the story repeated. How the king had asked Johnson if he was then writing anything, and he had answered he was not, for he had pretty well told the world what he knew, and must now read to acquire more knowledge. How the king said he did not think Johnson borrowed much from anybody; and the other venturing to think he had done his part as a writer, was handsomely assured ‘I ‘would have thought so too, if you had not written so well.’ How his majesty next observed that he supposed he must already have read a great deal, to which Johnson replied that he thought more than he read, and for instance had not read much, compared with Doctor Warburton; whereto the king rejoined that he heard Doctor Warburton was a man of such general knowledge that his learning resembled Garrick’s acting in its universality. How his majesty afterwards asked if there were any other literary journals published in the kingdom, except the *Monthly* and *Critical Review*, and being told there was no other, enquired which of them was best; whereupon Johnson replied that the *Monthly Review* was done with most care, and the *Critical* upon the best principles, for that the authors of the *Monthly* were enemies to the church; which the king said he was sorry to hear. How his majesty talked of the university libraries, of Sir John Hill’s veracity, and of Lord Lyttelton’s history; and how he proposed that the literary biography of the country

should be undertaken by Johnson, who thereupon signified his readiness to comply with the royal wishes (of which he never heard another syllable). How, during the whole of the interview, to use the description given to Boswell by the librarian, Johnson talked to his majesty with profound respect, but still in his firm manly manner, with a sonorous voice, and never in that subdued tone which is commonly used at the levee and in the drawing-room. And how, at the end of it, the flattered sage protested that the manners of the bucolic young sovereign, 'let them talk of them as they will,' were those of as fine a gentleman as Louis the Fourteenth or Charles the Second could have been. 'Ah!' said the charmed and charming Sévigné, when *her* king had danced with her, 'c'est le plus grand roi du monde!'

'And did you say *nothing*, sir,' asked one of the circle who stood round Johnson at Mr. Reynolds's when he detailed the interview there, 'to the king's high compliment on your writing?' 'No sir,' answered Johnson, with admirable taste. 'When the king had said it, it was to be so. It was not for me to bandy civilities with my sovereign.' Highly characteristic of him was what he added as his opinion of the advantage of such an interview. 'I found,' he said, in answer to the frank and lively questioning of Joseph Warton, 'his majesty wished I should talk, and I made it my business to talk. I find it does a man good to be talked to by his sovereign. In the first place *a man cannot be in a passion*. . .' Here he

stopped; but he had said enough. The consciousness of his own too frequent habit of roaring down an adversary in conversation, from which such men as the Wartons as well as Goldsmith suffered, could hardly have been more amusingly confessed; and it is possible that Thomas Warton may have remembered it in the courteous severity of his retort, when Johnson so fiercely fell upon him at Reynolds's a few years later. 'Sir, I am not used to be contradicted.' 'Better for yourself and friends, sir, if you were. Our admiration could not be increased, but our love might.'

One of the listeners standing near Johnson, when he began his narrative, had in the course of it silently retreated from the circle. 'Doctor Goldsmith,' says Boswell, 'remained unmoved upon a sofa at some distance, affecting not to join in the least in the eager curiosity of the company. He assigned as a reason for his gloom and seeming inattention, that he apprehended Johnson had relinquished his purpose of furnishing him with a prologue to his play, with the hopes of which he had been flattered; but it was strongly suspected that he was fretting with chagrin and envy at the singular honour Doctor Johnson had lately enjoyed. At length the frankness and simplicity of his natural character prevailed. He sprung from the sofa, advanced to Johnson, and in a kind of flutter, from imagining himself in the situation which he had just been hearing described, exclaimed, "Well, you acquitted yourself in this conversation better than I should have

“ done ; for I should have bowed and stammered through  
“ the whole of it.”

Poor Goldsmith might have reason to be anxious about his prologue, for his play had brought him nothing but anxiety. *‘In theatro sedet atra cura.’* A letter lies before me from Horace Walpole’s neighbour, Kitty Clive, who writes expressively though she spells ill (the great Mrs. Pritchard used to talk of her ‘gownd’), assuring her friend Colman that ‘vexation and fretting in a theater are the foundation of all Billous complaints. I speak by expeariance. I have been fretted by managers till my gaul has overflow’d like the river Nile ;’ and precisely thus it befel Goldsmith. His comedy completed, Kitty’s ‘billous’ complaint began ; and there was soon an overflow of gall. Matters could not have fallen out worse for advantageous approach to Garrick, and the new dramatist’s thoughts turned at first to Covent Garden. While the play was in progress it was undoubtedly intended for Beard. But Covent Garden theatre was in such confusion from Rich’s death, and Beard’s doubts and deafness, that Goldsmith resolved to make trial of Garrick. They do not seem to have met since their first luckless meeting, but Reynolds now interposed to bring them together ; and at the painter’s house in Leicester Square, Goldsmith placed in Garrick’s hands the manuscript of the *Good Natured Man*. Tom Davics was afterward at some pains to describe what he conceived to have been the tone of their interview, and tells us that the manager, being at all times conscious of his own merit,



was perhaps more ostentatious of his abilities to serve a dramatic author than became a man of his prudence, while the poet, on his side, was as fully persuaded of his own importance and independent greatness. 'Mr. Garrick expected that the writer would esteem the patronage of his play as a favour, but Goldsmith rejected all ideas of kindness in a bargain that was intended to be of mutual advantage to both parties.' Both were in error, and providing cares and bitterness for each other; of which the heaviest portion fell naturally on the weakest shoulders. Mere pride must always be injurious to all men; but where it cannot itself afford that the very claim it sets up should succeed, deplorable indeed is its humiliation.

Let us admit that, in this matter of patronage, the poet might not improperly have consented at the first, to what with an ill grace he was driven to consent at last. He was possibly too eager to visit upon the actor his resentment of the want of another kind of patronage; and to interpose uneasy remembrances of a former quarrel, before what should have been a real sense of what was due to Garrick, and a proper concession of it. Johnson had no love of patronage, but would not have counselled this. Often, when most bitter on the same angry theme, and venting with the least scruple his rage at the actor's foppery, would he stop to remind himself of the consideration Garrick needed after all, and of how little in reality he assumed. For then, all generous and tolerant as at heart he was, not a merit or advantage of his fellow-townsmen's

unexampled success, since the day they entered London together with fourpence between them, but would rise and plead in his behalf. The popular actor's intercourse with the great, his absolute control of crowds of dependants, his sprightliness as a writer and talker equalled by few, his immense acquired wealth, the elevation and social esteem he had conferred upon his calling, and the applause he had for ever had sounded in his ears, and dashed in his face; all would in succession array themselves in Johnson's mind, till he was fain to protest, philosopher as he was, that if all that had happened to *him*, if lords and ladies had flattered him, if sovereigns and statesmen had petted him, and if the public had adored him, he must have had a couple of fellows with long poles continually walking before him to knock down everybody that stood in the way. The condescension of patronage was at least a very harmless long pole, and Goldsmith might have taken a few taps from it. A mere sensitive though clever thinker like Hans Andersen, fretting behind the scenes, will talk of an actor putting himself in one scale and all the rest of the world in another; but a profoundly just man like Goethe, wise in a theatre as everywhere else, will show you that the actor's love of admiration is a part of his means to please, and that he is nothing if he seem not something to himself and others. Not to be omitted, at the same time, and not to be palliated, is Garrick's large share of blame in this special instance. His first professions should not have merged, as they did, into

excuses and delays ; but should have taken, either way, a decisive tone. Keeping up fair words of success to Goldsmith, it would seem he gave private assurances to Johnson and Reynolds that the comedy could not possibly succeed. Interviews followed at his own house ; explanations, and proposals for alteration ; doubtful acquiescence, and doubtful withdrawal of it. Matters stood thus, the season meanwhile passing to its close, when Goldsmith, whose wants had never been so urgent, and whose immediate chances of relieving them had been lost through Garrick's delays, thought himself justified in asking the manager to advance him forty pounds upon a note of the younger Newbery's. Garrick had at this time renewed his promise to act the play ; and was in all probability very glad to lend this money, and profit by what advantage it might offer him. It is certain that soon afterward he suggested to the luckless dramatist, as essential to his success, a series of important alterations which were at once and with some indignation rejected.

The leading characters in the piece were three ; and are understood to remain, at present, much as when they left Garrick's hands. In *Honeywood*, who gives the comedy its title, we have occasional conscious glance, not to be mistaken, at the writer's own infirmities. Nor is there any disposition to make light of them. Perhaps the errors which arise from easiness of disposition, and tend to unintentional confusions of right and wrong, have never been touched with a happier severity. Splendid as they seem,

and borrowing still the name from some neighbouring duty, they are shewn for what they really are; and not all our liking for good-nature, nor all the mirth it gives us in this comedy, can prevent our seeing, with its help, that there is a charity which may be a great injustice, a sort of benevolence for which weakness would be the better name, and a friendship that may be nothing but credulity. In *Croaker* we have the contrast and foil to this, and one of the best drawn characters of modern comedy. In the way of wit, Wycherly or Congreve have done few things better; and Farquhar himself could not have surpassed the heartiness of it, or thrown into the croaking a more unctuous enjoyment. We feel it to be a perfect satisfaction to be miserable with *Croaker*. His friend Dick Doleful was quite right when he discovered that he rhymed to joker. The *Rambler's* brief sketch of 'Suspirius the screech-owl' supplied some hints for the character; but the masterly invention, and rich breadth of comedy, which made a living man out of this half page of a book, were entirely Goldsmith's. It is the business of the stage to deal with what lies about us most familiarly, *humanitas humanissima*; and it is the test of a dramatist of genius that he should make matters of this kind, in themselves the least remote, appear to be the most original. No one had seen him on the stage before; yet every one had known, or been, his own *Croaker*. For all the world is for ever croaking, more or less; and only a few know why. 'There's the advantage 'of fretting away our misfortunes before-hand, we never

‘feel them when they come.’ In excellent harmony with these imaginary misfortunes, too, are the ideal acquaintance of *Lofty*; as new to the stage, and as commonly met with in the street. *Jack Lofty* is the first of the family of Jack Brags, who have since been so laughter-moving in books and theatres; nor is his mirth without a moral. ‘I begin to find that the man who first invented the art of speaking truth, was a much cunninger fellow than I thought him.’ It was Mrs. Inchbald’s favourite character; when it fell into the hands of the admirable Lewis, on the play’s reproduction half a century since, it became a general favourite; and when a proposed revival of the comedy was interrupted six years ago by the abrupt termination of the best theatrical management within my recollection, it was the character selected for personation by the great actor who held Garrick’s office and power in the theatre.

Yet on the unlucky *Lofty* it was, that the weight of Garrick’s hostile criticism descended. He pointed out that according to the construction of the comedy, its important figures were *Croaker* and *Honeywood*; that anything which drew off attention from them, must damage the theatrical effect; and that a new character should be introduced, not to divide interest or laughter with theirs, but to bring out their special contrasts more broadly. It was a criticism unworthy of Garrick, because founded on the most limited stage notions; yet he adhered to it pertinaciously. He would play the alteration, if made; but

he would not play the comedy as it stood. Goldsmith made in the first instance very violent objections ; softened into remonstrance and persuasion, which he found equally unavailing ; is described to have written many letters, which displayed in more than the confusion of their language and the unsteadiness of their writing, the anxiety and eagerness of the writer ; and at last, under the bitter goad of his pecuniary wants, is understood to have made partial concession. But it had come too late. The alterations were certainly not made, though the comedy remained some time longer in Garrick's hands. There was a long fluctuation between encouragement and doubt, says Bishop Percy, 'with the usual uncertainty.' The truth appears to have been, that the more Garrick examined the comedy, the less available to his views he found it ; and he was at last driven to an expedient he had before found serviceable, when more had been promised than he was able to perform and his authorial relations were become somewhat complex, and proposed a sort of arbitration. But poor Goldsmith smarted more under this than any other part of the tedious negotiation ; and on Garrick's proceeding to name for his arbitrator, Whitehead the laureat, who was acting at the time as his 'reader' in such matters, a dispute of so much vehemence and anger ensued, that the services of Burke as well as Reynolds were needed to moderate the disputants. Of all the manager's slights of the poet, this was forgotten last ; and occasion to recall it was always seized with bitterness. There was in the

following year a hideously unintelligible play called *Zingis*, forced upon Garrick by a 'distinguished officer in the India service,' and by Garrick forced nine nights upon the public, as to which the same process again took place, under resolute protest from the gallant author. 'I think 'it very unnecessary,' he said (and being a stronger man than Goldsmith he carried his point), 'to submit the 'tragedy to any man's judgment but yours. I know not 'in what manner Doctor Goldsmith came to a knowledge 'of this transaction ; but it is certain that he mentioned 'it publicly last night at Ranelagh, to a gentleman who 'asked me in a jeering manner, *What sentence the committee of critics had passed on my play ?*'

Such was the state of affairs, and of feeling, between Garrick and Goldsmith, when a piece of news came suddenly to their knowledge, in no small degree interesting to both. Beard's uncertainty as to his own and his father-in-law's property in Covent Garden had closed at last, in a very unexpected arrangement. Early in the May of this year Colman's mother (who was sister to Lady Bath) died, leaving him a legacy of six thousand pounds; and this strengthened him for a step, of which it is probable that Garrick, in a letter already quoted, threw out the first brooding germ. They had but patched and darned their quarrel; and on the occasion of a comedy by Colman from Voltaire (*The English Merchant*) produced in this preceding February, new rents had shown themselves. Meanwhile it was reported that two men of mere business, named Harris and

Rutherford, were in treaty with Beard; but another rumour was with greater difficulty believed, that successful inducements had been thrown out to Powell, notwithstanding his habit (according to his own letters) of teaching his wife and children to bless Garrick's name, to withdraw him from his Drury Lane engagements and enlist him in hostility to Garrick. 'I have not always met with gratitude 'in a playhouse,' said the latter, while Powell's gratitude was overflowing; and here was an illustration of it quite unexpected. There is no reason to doubt the interest which, in the midst of all his jealousies of temperament, the great actor had evinced for his young competitor. From a narrative which necessarily throws into prominence the weaker points of his character, it should not be omitted that he really loved his art, and desired always to see it advanced in esteem. 'Make sure of your ground in 'every step you take,' had been his advice to Powell. 'The 'famous Baron of France used to say, that an actor should 'be *nursed in the lap of Queens*; by which he meant that 'the best accomplishments were necessary to form a great 'actor. Read at your leisure other books beside plays in 'which you are concerned. Do not sacrifice your taste and 'feelings to applause: convert an audience to *your* manner, 'do not be converted to their's.' It was ill return to find Powell now secretly deserting to the camp of the enemy! 'It is impossible that it should hurt us,' he nevertheless wrote to his brother, with a sense that it would hurt them visible in every line. 'If Powell is to be director, we have



‘reason to rejoice; for he is finely calculated for management. What a strange affair! We shall know all in ‘time.’ He knew more when he next wrote, and was less able to comprehend it; but protested that every body would be surprised at the ease and little concern he should manifest on the occasion, and proceeded to give his brother amusing proofs of equanimity. ‘I am sure there is something in it, and ‘yet the more I think of it, the more I am puzzled. Who ‘finds *money*? what is the *plan*? who are the *directors*? ‘Damn me, if I can comprehend it! but I shall know more. ‘I have not the least notion of their doing anything to give ‘us one moment of uneasiness. What! has Holland no ‘hand in this? Is *he* hummed?’ Holland, though a young actor in the same walk, and of ambitious expectations, had a most romantic friendship for Powell; had first introduced him to Garrick; had surrendered parts to him which at the time were understood to be his own; and, strangely enough, while the sudden death of Powell was matter of general regret in less than two years from this time, himself very suddenly died. But he had not the means to join Powell in such a scheme as the present, and the doubt of Powell’s own means was a very natural one on Garrick’s part. The money required, as he had himself before stated, was sixty thousand pounds, of which Harris and Rutherford contributed half; and with whatever reason he questioned Powell’s tact for the management, his inability to supply the money he might at any rate rely upon. But even he seems as little to have known what a fashion his

handsome young rival had become, without as well as within the theatre, as that in two short years this fashion, and its attendant dissipation, would claim their victim. Eleven thousand pounds were advanced towards Powell's share in the patent, by the means and intercession of a famous beauty; and Colman, having added to his mother's legacy by a loan from Becket the bookseller, consented to supply Powell's ignorance of management, and become purchaser of the fourth share. The matter was finally arranged; another important desertion effected from Drury Lane in the person of Yates and his wife (an exquisite, gentle actress, though Kitty Clive, in one of her letters, objects to her habit of 'totering about to much, and flumping down 'to often'); and the agreements signed; before Garrick again wrote from Bath to his brother. He was now uneasy enough. 'Powell is a scoundrel,' he said, 'and Colman will repent his conjunction in every vein. I hope to God that my partner has not talked with Powell of any agreement, or a friendly intercourse between the houses; that would be ruin indeed! I cannot forgive Powell.' His partner, Lacy, *had* so spoken, and had indiscreetly promised a continuance of friendship; which Garrick at once withdrew; and exacting, as he had a perfect right to do, Powell's bond of a thousand pounds forfeited by the breach of his engagement, he brought over Barry and Mrs. Dancer to Drury Lane by a bribe of £1500 a-year, and openly prepared for war.

From the Yateses, with whom he was well acquainted,

Goldsmith probably heard of all this while in progress, naturally with some satisfaction, and made immediate overtures to Colman. By midsummer, Powell being in Bristol, and the other two partners abroad, Colman was in the thick of his new duties; and, fortunately for Goldsmith, being left to make his preparations alone, his first acts of management (as he afterwards stated during his disputes with his fellow patentees) were to 'engage Macklin, and accept Goldsmith's comedy, 'without consulting Harris and Rutherford, as he knew 'not where to direct to them.' Very creditable, in all its circumstances, was this manifestation of sympathy on Colman's part to an untried brother dramatist; and Goldsmith, though so wearied already with his dramatic experience as to have resolved that his first should be his last comedy, might fairly think and rejoice, for others if not for himself, that dramatic poets were likely for the future to have a protector who would decline taking advantage of their dependant situation, and scorn the importance derivable from trifling with their anxieties. The words are in a letter he addressed to Colman, which now lies before me; which was found the other day among the papers of Colman's successor at the Haymarket; and of which I present a fac-simile to the reader, who will not fail to observe that the handwriting is somewhat steadier than when Goldsmith last appeared at a managerial bar. A man's handwriting is part of himself, and helps to complete his portraiture.

Temple, Garden Court;

July 19<sup>th</sup>  
Dear Sir,

I am very much obliged to you, both for your kind partiality in my favour, and your tenderness in shortening the interval of my expectation. That the play is liable to many objections I well know; but I am happy that it is in hands the most capable in the world of removing them. If then Dear Sir, you will complete your

favours by putting the piece into such a state as it may be acted, or of directing me how to do it I shall ever retain a sense of your good w<sup>ts</sup> to me. And indeed this most probably ~~the~~ this be the last I shall ever write yet I can't help feeling a secret satisfaction that poets for the future are likely to have a protector who declines taking advantage of their dependent situation and scorns that importance which

may be acquired by tritely  
with their anxieties.

I am Dear Sir with  
the greatest esteem your most  
obedient humble servant;

Oliver Goldsmith.

To  
George Colman Esq.  
Richmond.

Having taken this decisive step, Goldsmith wrote on the following day to the now rival manager, who had left town for Litchfield; and, though his letter shows the coolness which had arisen between them, it is a curious proof of his deference to the sensitiveness of Garrick that he should use only the name of the old Covent Garden patentee, and put forth what he had recently done with his play under cover of

his original intention in respect to it. His letter is dated London, July 20, 1767, and runs thus. 'Sir, A few days ago Mr. Beard renewed his claim to the piece which I had written for his stage, and had as a friend submitted to your perusal. As I found you had very great difficulties about that piece, I complied with his desire; thinking it wrong to take up the attention of my friends with such petty concerns as mine, or to load your good nature by a compliance rather with their requests than my merits. I am extremely sorry that you should think me warm at our last meeting; your judgment certainly ought to be free, especially in a matter which must in some measure concern your own credit and interest. I assure you, sir, I have no disposition to differ with you on this or any other account, but am with an high opinion of your abilities and a very real esteem, sir, your most obedient humble servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH.'

To this Garrick answered by a letter dated five days later from Litchfield, in these terms. 'Sir, I was at Birmingham when your letter came to this place, or I should have answered and thanked you for it immediately. I was indeed much hurt that your warmth at our last meeting mistook my sincere and friendly attention to your play, for the remains of a former misunderstanding which I had as much forgot as if it had never existed. What I said to you at my own house I now repeat, that I felt more pain in giving my sentiments than you possibly would in receiving them. It has been the business,

‘ and ever will be, of my life, to live on the best terms  
‘ with men of genius ; and I know that Dr. Goldsmith  
‘ will have no reason to change his previous friendly dis-  
‘ position towards me, as I shall be glad of every future  
‘ opportunity to convince him how much I am his obedient  
‘ servant and well-wisher, D. GARRICK.’

Thus fairly launched was this great theatrical rivalry ; which received even additional zest from the spirit with which Foote now began his first regular campaign in the Haymarket, by right of the summer patent the Duke of York had obtained for him (compensation for the accident at Lord Mexborough’s the preceding summer, when a practical joke of the Duke’s cost Foote his leg), and with help of the two great reinforcements already secured for Drury Lane, of Barry and his betrothed Mrs. Dancer, afterward his wife. They played in a poor and somewhat absurd tragedy called the *Countess of Salisbury*, which had made a vast sensation in Dublin ; and it is related of Goldsmith, as an instance of the zeal with which he had embarked against the Drury Lane party, that he took whimsical occasion during its performance of suddenly turning a crowded, and, till then, favourable audience, against the *Countess* and her representative, by ludicrous allusion to another sort of actress then figuring on a wider stage. He had sat out four foolish acts with great calmness and apparent temper ; but as the plot thickened in the fifth, and blood and slaughter came crowding on the scene, he rose from his seat in a great hurry, cried out very audibly,



‘*Brownrigg! Brownrigg, by God!*’ and left the theatre. It may have been partizanship, but it was also very pardonable wit.

Nor, if partizanship may be justified at any time, was it here without its excuses. He had reason to think Colman embarked in a good work, and for which, whether knowingly or not, he had made an unexampled sacrifice. On the death of stingy old Lord Bath three years before, he had left his enormous wealth (upwards of £1,200,000) to an old brother he despised, with a sort of injunction that his nephew was to have part in its ultimate disposition; and the Covent Garden arrangements had not long been completed when General Pulteney died, leaving Colman a simple four hundred a-year. His connection with Miss Ford the actress, had been displeasing to the general; but the unpardonable offence was his having secretly turned manager of a theatre. Miss Ford was the mother of the younger Colman, now a child: yet old enough to retain and remember, when he wrote his *Random Records*, the impression at this time made upon him by Goldsmith’s simple and playful manners; and by that love of children which had attended him through life, which was noted everywhere, and made itself felt at even pompous Hawkins’s. ‘I little thought what I should have to boast,’ says Miss Hawkins, ‘when Goldsmith taught me to play *Jack and Gill* by two bits of paper on his fingers.’ This lady observed, too, a distinction between his and Garrick’s way with children, which the younger Colman describes; how

the one played to please the boy, and the other as though to please himself: while not even Foote, with his knowing broad grin, his snuff-begrimed face, and his unvarying salutation of 'blow your nose child,' was half so humorous as Goldsmith. He would at any time, for amusement of the nursery, dance a mock minuet, sing a song, or play the flute; and thought little of even putting on his best wig the wrong side foremost. One of these childish reminiscences will bear relating in detail. Drinking coffee with Colman, on one of his first visits to Richmond, he took little George upon his knee to amuse him; and being rewarded for his pains by a spiteful attack upon the face, summary paternal punishment was inflicted by solitary confinement in an adjoining dark room. But here, when matters seemed desperate with the howling and screaming little prisoner, the door was unexpectedly unlocked and opened. 'It was the tender-hearted Doctor himself' pursues the teller of the story, 'with a lighted candle in his hand, and a smile upon his countenance, which was still partially red from the effects of my petulance. I sulked and sobbed, and he fondled and soothed, till I began to brighten: when Goldsmith, seizing the propitious moment of returning good humour, put down the candle and began to conjure. He placed three hats which happened to be in the room, upon the carpet, and a shilling under each. The shillings, he told me, were England, France, and Spain. *Hey, presto, cockolorum!* cried the Doctor; and lo! on uncovering the shillings,

' which had been dispersed each beneath a separate hat,  
 ' they were all  
 ' found con-  
 ' gregated un-  
 ' der one. It  
 ' amazed me  
 ' beyond mea-  
 ' sure; and as-  
 ' tonishment  
 ' must have  
 ' amounted to



' awe, if the good nature of the man had not obviated  
 ' my dread of the magician ; but from that time, when-  
 ' ever the Doctor came to visit my father, we were always  
 ' merry playfellows.' The little hero of the incident was a  
 child of only five years old : but we have evidence in a letter  
 of Garrick's to his father, that even a full year and a half  
 before this he had entertained Mrs. Garrick with a whole  
 ' budget ' of stories and songs ; had delivered the *Chimney  
 Sweep* with exquisite taste as a solo ; and, in the form of  
 a duet with Garrick, *Old Rose and Burn the Bellows*.

But more serious affairs again claim Goldsmith's atten-  
 tion, and ours. His comedy cannot, in the most favourable  
 expectation, appear before Christmas ; and his necessities  
 are hardly less pressing, meanwhile, than in his most des-  
 titute time. The utmost he received this year from the  
 elder Newbery, for his usual task-work, would seem to have  
 been about ten pounds for a compilation on a historical

subject. The concurrent advance of another ten pounds on his promissory note shows their friendly relations still subsisting; but the present illness of the publisher, from which he never recovered, had for some months interrupted the ordinary course of his business, and its management was gradually devolving on his nephew. No less a person than Tom Davies, however, came to Goldsmith's relief. Tom's business had thriven since he left the stage, and he determined to speculate in a history. The *Letters from a Nobleman to his Son* continued to sell; and still to excite curiosity, whether or not Lord Lyttelton had really written them. 'I 'asked Lord L. himself,' writes the learned Mrs. Carter to the less learned Mrs. Montagu, 'who assured me that he had 'never read them through, and moreover seemed to be very 'clearly of opinion that he did not write them. Seriously you 'may deny his being the author with the fullest certainty. It 'seems they were writ by Lord Cork.' All this sort of gossip (with no more foundation in the latter case than that Lord Cork and Orrery *had* addressed to his son a translation of Pliny's as well as other letters, and was no longer alive to contradict the rumour) was better known to Davies than to any one; and the sensible suggestion occurred to him of a History of Rome from the same hand, in the same easy, popular, unlearned manner. An agreement was accordingly drawn up, in which Goldsmith undertook to write such a book in two volumes, and if possible to complete it in two years, for the sum of two hundred and fifty guineas; an undertaking of a somewhat brighter complexion than has

yet appeared in these pages; rife with future promise in that respect, it may be; and certainly very creditable to Davies. It is alleged by Seward and Isaac Reed, that, shortly before this agreement, Goldsmith's necessities had induced him to apply for the Gresham lectureship on Civil Law; an office of small remuneration and smaller responsibility, which the death of a Mr. Mace had vacated and to which a Mr. Jeffries was elected; but his name does not seem to have been formally entered as a candidate, and it is more certain that shortly after the agreement with Davies he had again taken lodgings in his favourite Islington, and was busy writing there.

Goldsmith's resource, in the midst of labour, as in his brief intervals of leisure, was still the country-haunt, the club, and the theatre; nor should what was called his Wednesday's club fail to find commemoration here. The social dignities of Gerrard Street had not sufficed for his 'clubable' propensities. Wholly at his ease there, he could not always be; and it will happen to even those who are greatest with their great friends, to find themselves pleasantest with their least. The very year before Doctor Johnson died he expressed his own strong sense of this, in founding the modest club to which he invited Reynolds ('the terms are lax, and the expenses light: we meet thrice a week, and he who misses forfeits 'twopence'); and, if it were a want to Johnson to have occasional admixture of inferior intellects to be at ease with, how much more to Goldsmith! His shilling-rubber

club at the Devil Tavern (scene of that earliest club for which Ben Jonson wrote his Latin rules), has been already named; and he frequented another of the same modest pretension, in the parlour of the Bedford in Covent Garden. But what most consoled him for the surrendered haunts of his obscurer days, was a minor club (known afterward by his own name) at the Globe Tavern in Fleet Street; where he attended every Wednesday as regularly as on the Fridays in Gerrard Street, and seems to have 'played the fool' as agreeably as when he had no reputation to be damaged by the folly. Songs sung by the members were the leading attraction at this club; and I derive my principal knowledge of it from a collection of songs and poems of the time which belonged to one of the members. This worthy 'William Ballantyne' had solaced his old age with manuscript notes on the amusements of his youth; and the book, so annotated, passed into the possession of my friend Mr. Bolton Corney.

Among the least obscure members were King the comedian (whose reputation *Lord Ogleby* had established); little Hugh Kelly, a young Irishman of eight-and-twenty, who had lately shown some variety of cleverness and superficial talent, and now occupied chambers near Goldsmith's, in the Temple; Edward Thompson, whom Garrick assisted with his interest to a command in the navy, and who is still remembered for his songs and his edition of Andrew Marvel; and another Irishman, named Glover, who had been bred a doctor, figured afterwards as an actor, and now

earned a scanty subsistence as a sort of Grub Street Galen. The anecdotes of Goldsmith which appeared on his death in the *Annual Register* (with the signature G.), which re-appeared in the Dublin edition (1777) of his poems by Malone, and were adopted into the memoirs by Evans and Percy, were written by this Glover; who was one of the many humble Irish clients whom Goldsmith's fame drew around him, and who profited by every scantiest gleam of his prosperity. It is he who says (and none had better cause to say it), '*Our Doctor*,' as Goldsmith was now universally called, 'had a constant levee of his distressed countrymen, whose wants, as far as he was able, he always relieved; and he has been often known to leave himself even without a guinea, in order to supply the necessities of others.' It is to be added of Glover, however, who was notorious for his songs and imitations, that he was given to practical jokes; and often rewarded his patron's generosity with very impudent betrayal of his simplicity. It was he who, in one of his Hampstead rambles, took Goldsmith into a cottage at West End of whose inhabitants he knew nothing, and, to the poet's awkward horror and mal-address, when he saw the trick, imposed himself on the party assembled as a pretended old acquaintance, and coolly sat down to tea with them.

Hugh Kelly seems to have been a greater favourite with good Mr. Ballantyne. 'Much,' says one of his notes, 'as I esteemed Mr. Kelly, when a member of the Wednesday club, at the Globe in Fleet Street, called Goldsmith's,

‘ who was seldom absent . . I respected him because he was ‘ always unassuming . . *this*’ (the note is appended to a poem of Kelly’s called *Meditation*), ‘ had I then known ‘ him to be the author of it, would have made me adore ‘ him.’ The poem nevertheless is poor enough ; and, though Kelly was certainly popular with his nearer friends, and had many kindly qualities, his unassumingness may be doubted. He had lately emerged to notoriety, out of a desperate and obscure struggle, by somewhat questionable arts. His youth had been passed in Dublin as a stay-maker’s apprentice, and making sudden flight from this uncongenial employment, he was obliged to resume it in London to save himself from starvation ; but he succeeded afterwards in hiring himself as writer to an attorney, from this got promotion to Grub Street, and had laboured meanly, up to the present year, in hack work for the magazines and newspapers, when it occurred to him to make profit of Churchill’s example and set up as a satirist and censor of the stage. This he did after the usual fashion of an imitator, and in his *Thespis* caricatured the *Rosciad*. Poor Mrs. Dancer he called a ‘ moon-eyed idiot ;’ talked of ‘ Clive’s weak head and execrable heart ;’ libelled such men as Woodward and Moody ; and lavished all his praise on the Hursts, Ackmans, and Bransbys. Yet though the manifest source of such inspiration was ‘ a public house ‘ within a few doors of Drury Lane Theatre,’ where the fettered lions of the stage were always growling against their tamers, we find that ‘ the talents for satire displayed



‘in this work by Mr. Kelly, recommended him at once to ‘the notice of Mr. Garrick.’ What resulted from that notice will soon, with somewhat higher pretensions, re-introduce the object of it : and meanwhile he may be left with Mr. Ballantyne’s praise, and with the remark of Johnson to counterbalance it ; who made answer to Kelly’s request for permission to converse with him, ‘ Sir, I never ‘desire to converse with a man who has written more than ‘he has read.’

Of the obscurer members of the Globe club our mention may be limited to a Mr. Gordon, who is remembered by Mr. Ballantyne in connection with the jovial and jocund song of *Nottingham Ale*. ‘Mr. Gordon,’ he says, ‘the ‘largest man I ever kept company with, usually sung this ‘song at the Globe club ; and it always very much pleased ‘Doctor Goldsmith, Doctor Glover, good Tom King the ‘comedian, and myself, William Ballantyne.’ Nor was the evening’s amusement limited to songs, but had the variety of dramatic imitations, with occasional original epigram ; and here was first heard the celebrated epitaph (Goldsmith had been reading Pope’s and Swift’s *Miscellanies*) on Edward Purdon.

Here lies poor Ned Purdon, from misery freed,  
Who long was a bookseller’s hack ;  
He led such a damnable life in this world,  
I don’t think he ’ll wish to come back.

It was in the April of the present year that Purdon fitly closed his luckless life by suddenly dropping down dead

in Smithfield; and as it was chiefly Goldsmith's pittance that had saved him thus long from starvation, it was well that the same friend should give him his solitary chance of escape from oblivion. 'Doctor Goldsmith made this 'epitaph,' says William Ballantyne, 'in his way from his 'chambers in the Temple to the Wednesday evening's club 'at the Globe. *I think he will never come back*, I believe 'he said. I was sitting by him, and he repeated it more 'than twice. *I think he will never come back.*' Ah! and not altogether as a jest, it may be, the second and the third time. There was something in Purdon's fate, from their first meeting in college to that incident in Smithfield, which had no very violent contrast to his own; and remembering what Glover has said of his frequent sudden descents from mirth to melancholy, some such fitful change of temper would here have been natural enough. 'His disappointments at these times,' Glover tells us, 'made him peevish and sullen; and he has often left his 'party of convivial friends abruptly in the evening, in 'order to go home and brood over his misfortunes.' But a better medicine for his grief than brooding over it, was a sudden start into the country to forget it; and it was probably with a feeling of this kind he had in the summer revisited Islington, to which, after this Wednesdays' club digression, we must now very briefly return.

He had one room in the turret of Canonbury House, which, since altered and subdivided, to within the last twenty years remained as it was in his time; a genuine

relic of Elizabeth's hunting seat. It was an old oak room on the first floor, with Gothic windows, panelled wainscot, and a recess in its eastern corner for a large press bedstead, which doubtless the poet occupied. Canonbury Tower was for many years let out in this way, and had been the frequent resort of men connected with literature: but if (as at times alleged) any of Goldsmith's poetry was written here, it was written in the present autumn, and could have been but the fragments or beginnings of a poem; for he did not return to the lodging. He now remained some weeks in it; and is said to have been often found, during the time, among a social party of his fellow-lodgers (publishers Robinson and Francis Newbery, printers Baker and Hamilton, editor Beaufort afterwards of the *Town and Country Magazine*, poets Woty and Huddleston Wynne, and pamphleteering parsons Rider and Sellon), presiding at the festive board of the Crown tavern, in the Islington Lower Road, where they had formed a kind of temporary club. At the close of the year he had returned to the Temple, was in communication with Burke about his comedy, and was again pretty constant in his attendance at Gerrard Street.

He found political excitement raging. He might have wondered to see, among the first acts of the new administration, his countryman and friend Robert Nugent, the most furious upholder of colonial taxation, selected for a lordship of the Board of Trade, and raised to the rank of Baron Nugent and Viscount Clare; yet this was nothing

to the marvel of seeing emanate from Lord Chatham's Chancellor of the Exchequer, a new project for taxation of America. The rest of their career had been only less disgraceful; nor is it possible, without some allusion to it, to exhibit properly the social or other influences of the time. Violating public faith in their attack on the East India Charter, they had sustained from its resolute exposure by Mr. O'Bourke (as pompous Beckford, Lord Chatham's tool in the matter, persisted in calling Edmund), a most damaging blow. They had suffered an ignominious defeat, without precedent since Walpole's fall, on the question of continuing the land tax at four shillings; which Dowdeswell succeeded in reducing to three, backed by all the country gentlemen, by the Bedfords and the Grenvilles, by the single partizan or so who still followed Newcastle, and by all the Rockinghams except Burke, who alone ('not 'having our number of acres,' said the top-booted gentlemen to each other) fell from his party on that question, and would not vote to lighten the land. They tasted as bitter humiliation in the later rejection of their overtures for help by the despised head of the last administration, who, manfully acting on Burke's warnings and suggestions, maintained, in the meeting with the Bedfords at Newcastle House, that the power of Lord Bute was still to be resisted; resolutely refused to sanction any arrangement which would again expose America to the mercies of George Grenville; and finally rejected the party combination which the old Duke of Newcastle, to get himself once more into office, had

ever since he left office been labouring to effect 'tooth and nail' (that is, says Horace Walpole, 'with the one of each 'sort that he has left, the old wretch!') And when, during the earlier progress of these confusions and disgraces, Chatham sullenly disappeared from the scene, and withdrew the last restraint from his ill-assorted colleagues, George Grenville, seeing his opportunity, had taunted the fiery Townshend to open rebellion. An agent from Connecticut was present in the house (the reader will remember that these were not the days of reporters), and has described what passed. Grenville stopped suddenly in the midst of a powerful speech on the existing financial depression, and turning to the treasury bench, exclaimed: 'You are cowards, you are afraid of the 'Americans. You dare not tax America.' 'Fear!' cried Townshend, from his seat: 'fear! cowards! dare not tax 'America? *I* dare tax America!' For a moment Grenville stood silent; but immediately added, 'Dare you tax 'America? I wish to God I could see it;' to which Townshend impetuously retorted, 'I will, I will.' The king's friends helped Grenville to keep him to this pledge, and he redeemed it. But though he passed his Colonial Importation Duties Bill easily as a turnpike act, the ill-fated ministry knew no more peace. Conway began to languish for the army, Grafton looked wistfully to Newmarket, Shelburne made no secret of his discontent; and the scenes that followed inflicted shame on all. Each, in his separate fashion, appealed against Townshend to Chatham, without,

in any case, the courtesy of an answer. Townshend, with mimicry transcending Foote's, and wit that only Garrick 'writing and acting extempore scenes of Congreve' was thought able to have equalled, rose from the seat still shared by his colleagues with himself, to burlesque them, to jeer at them, and, amid murmurs of wonder, admiration, applause, laughter, pity, and scorn, to assail even Chatham himself. Burke, with a more passionate ridicule retorting upon all, rose from *his* seat behind the occupants of the treasury bench; put up mock invocations to their absent, silent, sullen Chief, as a being before whom were veiled the faces (and here, at each lofty phrase, amid shouts of laughter, he waved his hand over the ministers) of thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers; and passed into a prayer to this 'Great Minister above, that 'rules and governs over all,' to have mercy upon them and not destroy the work of his own hands. Augustus Hervey called him to order. 'I have often suffered,' cried Burke as he sat down, 'under persecutions of order; but I did 'not expect its lash while at my prayers. I venerate the 'great man, and speak of him accordingly.' Still the great man kept silence. He had the gout, and would not leave Bath. He left Bath, and shut himself up in an inn at Marlborough. He left Marlborough, and came to London. But nothing would induce him to see his colleagues; not even the personal entreaties of the king. Would he, then, see himself, his majesty deigned to ask? He pleaded gout (it seems to have been suppressed gout, a worse affliction,

from which he was suffering), and retreated to North-End. But in a few days, having been seen by Lord Chesterfield 'riding about Hampstead Heath,' again the king wrote 'if you cannot come to me to-morrow I am ready to call at North-End;' and again, under cover of profuse submission, evasion did the work of refusal. By this time, in short, though labouring still with the bodily weakness which induced his first false step, Chatham seems to have discovered the drift of the king; and what it really was that his majesty had been aiming to effect, under cover of his own great name. Lord Charlemont, describing the state of things to Flood ('Charles Townshend is at open war, Conway is angry, Lord Shelburne out of humour, the Duke of Grafton by no means pleased, and Lord Bute's friends have at length positively declared themselves'), implies little further concealment of the palace plot; one of Chatham's first remarks on his subsequent reappearance in public, to the effect that 'the late good king had something about him by which it was possible to know whether he liked you or disliked you,' was pointedly levelled at the good king's grandson; and there can hardly be a doubt that the reigning monarch was now fencing only to obtain time, had already resolved upon a fresh arrangement of the offices, and, even from the moment of the new America taxation scheme, had turned with decisive favour to Charles Townshend himself. The failure of the cry for help to the Rockinghams, however, so well kept together by Burke (whose lately published *Correspondence* explains

many things before obscure) ; had been accompanied by a failure as decisive in respect to the Bedfords, whom the resolute Rigby held together ; before significant honours began to gather round Townshend. His brother, Lord Townshend, was made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (‘ I am ‘ told,’ writes Hume to Sir Gilbert Elliot, ‘ Lord Townshend openly ascribes his promotion entirely to Lord ‘ Bute ’) ; his wife was dignified with a peerage, as Pitt’s had heretofore been ; and the common talk had fixed upon himself for First Minister : when suddenly, on the 4th of September, 1767, being then only forty-two, he died of a neglected fever ; in the changes consequent on his death, the compact confederacy of Bedfords, leaving George Grenville in the lurch, marched boldly into office ; and the manœuvrings and intrigues so long in progress, to the disgrace of every one concerned, received their shameless consummation in what was called the Grafton ministry. It was a triumph for royalty, in spite of the Bedfords. ‘ In a great meeting lately,’ writes Hume to Sir Gilbert Elliot, ‘ Lord Bute’s health was proposed in a bumper. It ‘ will be a surprise to you certainly, if that noble lord should ‘ again come into fashion, and openly avow his share of ‘ influence, and be openly courted by all the world!’ Chatham had once more retired to Bath, and was in no respect consulted. Conway was to hold office till the beginning of the following year, and then make way for the Bedford nominee, Lord Weymouth ; Lord Sandwich and his old friend Dashwood, now Lord Le Despencer, were



to be joint Postmasters-General, Rigby to be Paymaster, and Lord Gower President of the Council: while with these men, so long as the name of Chatham could be kept to conjure with, Camden was to continue to be associated as Chancellor, and Shelburne as Secretary of State. Such ill-omened arrangements, which every other man with a sense of public decency execrated, were precisely what the king desired; and when the Chancellorship of the Exchequer was accepted by Lord North, and Mr. Charles Jenkinson (many years later created Lord Liverpool) was made a Lord of the Treasury, the royal satisfaction may be supposed to have been complete. North was the son of the princess dowager's intimate friend Lord Guildford: and scandal had not hesitated to find a reason for the extraordinary resemblance he presented to the king, in his clumsy figure, homely face, thick lips, light complexion and hair, bushy eye-brows, and protruding large grey eyes; which, as Walpole says, rolled about to no purpose, for he was utterly short-sighted. But he was an abler man than the king, and had too many good as well as amiable qualities for the service in which he now consented to enlist them. He was a man of wit and very various knowledge; underneath his heavy exterior, singularly awkward manners, and what seemed to be a perpetual tendency to fall asleep, he concealed great promptness of parts, and an aptitude for business not a little extraordinary; while the personal disinterestedness of his character, and the unalterable sweetness of his temper, carried him undoubtedly through more

public faults and miscarriages, with less of private hatred or dislike, than fell to any minister's lot before or since his time. If he helped to ruin his country, he did it with the most perfect good humour; and was always ready to surrender the profit as well as the credit of it, to 'the king's private junto.' Of that private junto Charles Jenkinson was the most active member. He had belonged to every ministry of the reign, except Lord Rockingham's. Now a year older than Goldsmith, he had started his public career as Goldsmith did, by writing in the *Monthly Review*; but tiring of the patronage of a bookseller, and discovering that Whiggery was not the way to court, he wheeled suddenly round to Toryism, offered his services to Lord Bute, and became the favourite's private secretary. Men grievously belied him, if he was not thenceforward the secret fetcher and carrier between Bute, the princess, the house of commons, and the king: nor did they scruple to say, that, by the lines of prudent caution in his face, by his stealthy, inscrutable, down-looking eyes (people who had read *Gil Blas* would call him pious signor Ordonez), and by the twinkling dark-lantern motion of his half-closed eye-lids while he spoke, Nature had seemed to mark him out for precisely such a service. His principles were simply what I have stated those of the junto to be; and were now most pithily expressed by Lord Barrington, the existing Secretary at War, who, while Lord North yet hesitated on the brink of the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, had eagerly consented to take the office. 'The king has

‘long known,’ said the worthy War-Secretary, ‘that I am entirely devoted to him; having no political connexion with any man, being determined never to form one, and conceiving that in this age the country and its constitution are best served by an unbiassed attachment to the crown.’ Amen, amen! The monarch is great and we are his prophets, cried Mr. Jenkinson and his followers.

And this was the close. To establish such a system as this, had cost the many public scandals of the last seven years; the disgrace of eminent men, the disruptions of useful friendships, the violation of private as of public honour. For this, had the country been deluged with libels; and men of station put forth against their quondam associates, lampoons unapproachable in scurril violence by the lowest gazetteers of Grub Street or the Fleet. Nor was that part of the mischief to end with the mischief it helped to create. The poisoned chalice was to have its ingredients commended to other lips; and already had significant indication been given that the lesson of libellous instruction would be taught to a wider school. One of Lord Sandwich’s libellers, parson Scott, had by the pungent slang of his letters (signed *Anti-Sejanus*) raised the sale of the *Public Advertiser* from fifteen hundred to three thousand a-day; but letters of higher and more piquant strain had succeeded his in that worthy journal, and seemed to threaten no quiet possession to the power so lately seized. This new writer had as yet taken no settled signature, nor were his compositions so finished or powerful as those

which made memorable the signature he took some twelve months later; but there was something in his writing, even now, which marked it out from the class it belonged to. There was a strong individual grasp of the matters on which he wrote, a familiar scorn of the men he talked about, and a special hatred of the junto of king's friends. His fervent abuse of the statesmen, such as Chatham, whom he afterwards exalted, has not been sufficiently referred to their existing relations with that faction which he hated with a private as well as public hatred; and which also at this time as bitterly arrayed against Chatham, the brothers-in-law with whom he afterward so cordially acted. It was as clear, from the first three letters of this writer, that he knew the 'atoms' and their 'original creating cause,' and that in the thick of 'its own webs' he had seen 'the venomous spider;' as it seems to me now to be proved, if the strongest circumstantial as well as internal evidence can be held to prove anything, that he was throughout all his correspondence employed in the War Office, under that model king's friend Lord Barrington himself. But be this as it might, his letters, variously and oddly signed, had thus early excited attention; and would sufficiently, with other indications, have foretold the coming storm, even if the arch priest of mischief had not suddenly himself arrived. Coolly, as if no outlawry existed, Wilkes crossed over to London; and his first careless business was to send an exquisite French letter to Garrick with the address of *Master Kiteley*, to ask him how he felt since his reconcilia-

tion with his wife. But none knew better than his quondam friend Sandwich what other business he was likely to have in hand. Though he had declined during the summer a 'genteel letter' from Paoli, offering him a regiment in Corsica to advance the cause of liberty, he had put himself in motion at the first reasonable prospect of another campaign for liberty (and Wilkes) at home. No one could doubt that the struggle would be a sharp one, and the first care of ministers was directed to the press.

Parson Scott, Sandwich's chaplain, went about to negotiate for writers; and a great many years afterward, when he was a rich old Doctor of Divinity, related an anecdote which was to illustrate the folly of men who are ignorant of the world, but which also illustrates the subject of these pages, and that picture of the time, literary and social, of which its politics form a necessary part. He had gone to Goldsmith, among others, to induce him to write in favour of the administration. 'I found him,' he said, 'in a miserable set of chambers in the Temple. I told him my authority; I told him that I was empowered to pay most liberally for his exertions; and, would you believe it! he was so absurd as to say, "I can earn as much as will supply my wants without writing for any party; the assistance you offer is therefore unnecessary to me." And so I left him,' added the Reverend Doctor Scott indignantly, 'in his garret.'

An impatience very natural to the holy man (who within four years had his reward in two fat crown livings), as a

like emotion had been to worthy Hawkins ; but on the other hand, a patience very natural to Goldsmith, and worthy of a noble remembrance. He knew, if ever man did, the chances he embraced in rejecting that offer. It is an easy transition from what the ministry were willing to do, if they could get return in kind ; to what, in the opposite case, they found it impossible to do. Poor Smollett had lately returned from foreign travel with shattered health and spirits, which he had vainly attempted to recruit in his native Scottish air ; and, feeling that a milder climate was his only hope, was now preparing again to go abroad for probably the last time, with hardly a hope of recovery and very scanty means of support. He stated his case to Hume, and Hume went to Lord Shelburne. The matter was very simple. The consulships of Leghorn and of Nice were both vacant at this very time ; and could either be obtained for Smollett, there might yet be hope for his broken health, or for quiet and repose till death should come. But this could not be. Nice was promised to the Spanish ambassador, Leghorn was under pledge to a friend of lawyer Dunning's, and there was no possibility of help for the author of *Peregrine Pickle*. In that state he was left till the following summer : when, with the prospect now certain which earlier he had hoped might be averted, he wrote to bid Hume farewell before departing to 'perpetual exile ;' and Hume could only grieve and say to his brother man of letters, that 'the indifference of ministers towards literature, which has been long, and

‘indeed always, the case in England, gives little prospect of any alteration in this particular.’ There was nothing for it but that this writer of genius, worn out in the service of booksellers, to whom his labours had been largely profitable; of the public, whose hours of leisure or of pain he had lightened; and of patrons, who at his utmost need deserted him; should pass abroad to labour, and to die. One year longer he stayed in England; published and proclaimed, in his last political romance, the universal falsehood of faction, his own remorse for having helped to sustain it, his farewell to the ‘rascally age,’ and the contempt for the Butes as well as Chathams it had for ever inspired him with; and in another year, having meanwhile written *Humphry Clinker*, was buried in the churchyard at Leghorn.

Such a possible fate as this, common in all times in England and at that time nearly universal, was something to reflect upon in those Garden Court chambers, which Mr. Scott, swelling with his brace of livings, can only deign to call a ‘garret.’ A poor enough abode they were, perhaps deserving only a little less contemptuous name; and here Goldsmith found himself, after twelve years of hard struggle, doubtless unable at all times to repress (what is so often the unavailing bitterness of the successful as well as unsuccessful man) the consideration of what he had done compared with what he might have done. The chances still remain, nevertheless, that he might not have done it; and the greater probability is that most people do what they are

qualified to do, in the condition of existence imposed upon them. It is very doubtful to me, upon the whole, if Goldsmith, placed as he was throughout life, could have done better than he did. Beginning with not even the choice which Fielding admits was his, of hackney writer or hackney coachman, he has fought his way at last to consideration and esteem. But he bears upon him the scars of his twelve years' conflict; of the mean sorrows through which he has passed, and of the cheap indulgences he has sought relief and help from. There is nothing plastic in his nature now. He is forty. His manners and habits are completely formed; and in them any further success can make little favourable change, whatever it may effect for his mind or his genius. The distrusts which were taught him in his darkest humiliations, cling around him still; and by the fitful changes and sudden necessities which have encouraged the weakness of his natural disposition, his really generous and most affectionate nature will still continue to be obscured. It was made matter of surprise and objection against him that though his poems are replete with fine moral sentiments and bespeak a great dignity of mind, yet he had no sense of the shames, or dread of the evils of poverty. How should he? and to what good end? Would it have been wisely done to engage in a useless conflict, to contest with what too plainly was his destiny, and gnaw the file for ever? It is true that poverty brings along with it many disreputable compliances, disingenuous shifts and resources, most sordid and dire necessities;



much, that, even while it helps to vindicate personal independence, may not be consistent with perfect self-respect. It is not a soil propitious to virtue and straightforwardness, often as they hardily grow there; and it is well that it should be escaped from, as soon as may be. But there are worse evils. There is a worse subjection to poverty than the ceasing to regard it with dread or with shame. There is that submission to it which is implied in a servile adulation of wealth, to the exclusion of every sense of disgrace but that of being poor; and there is, on the other hand, a familiarity with it, a careless but not unmanly relation with its wants and shames, which, rightly used, may leave infinite enduring pleasure for its every transitory pain. Where is to be found, for example, such an intimate knowledge of the poor, such ready and hearty sympathy with their joys and sorrows, such a strong social sentiment with what the kindest observers too little heed, such zeal for all that can impart

An hour's importance to the poor man's heart,

as in Goldsmith's writings? It is the real 'dignity of mind' which only poverty can teach so well; and when his friends admired it in his books, they might have questioned the value of their accompanying regret. Genius often effects its highest gains in a balance of what the world counts for disadvantage and loss; and it has fairly been made matter of doubt if Pope's body had been less crooked, whether his verses would have been so straight.

In every man, wealthy or poor in fortune or in genius, we see the result of the many various circumstances which have made him what he is ; wisdom finds its aptest exercise in a charitable consideration of all those circumstances ; and in so far as any such result is discovered to have profited and pleased mankind, they will not be unwise to accept it in compensation for whatever pain or disadvantage may have happened to attend it.

The last section of Goldsmith's *Life and Adventures* is now arrived at ; and in what remains to be described there will appear more strange inconsistencies than have yet been noted. The contrast which every man might be made more or less to illustrate, of circumstances and pretensions, of ignorance and knowledge, of accomplishments and blunders, will, for the few years to come, take more decisive shape and greater prominence in Goldsmith. He will be more seen in a society for which his habits have least adapted him, and where the power to make mirth of his foibles was held to be but fair consolation for the inability to make denial of his genius. 'Magnanimous Goldsmith, a goose-berry fool !' His reputation had been silently widening, in the midst and in despite of his humbler drudgery ; his poem, his novel, his essays, had imperceptibly but steadily enlarged the circle of his admirers ; and he was somewhat suddenly, at last, subjected to the social exactions that are levied on literary fame. But let the reader take along with him into these scenes what will alone enable him to judge them rightly.

Conversation is a game where the wise do not always win. When men talk together, the acute man will count higher than the subtle man ; and he who, though infinitely far from truth, can handle a solid point of argument, will seem wiser than the man round whom truth plays like 'an atmosphere,' but who cannot reason as he feels. The one forms opinions unconsciously, the other none for which he cannot give specific grounds ; and it was not inaptly, though humourously, said by Goldsmith of himself, that he disputed best when nobody was by, and always got the better when he argued alone. Society exposed him to continual misconstruction ; so that few more touching things have been recorded of him than those which have most awakened laughter. 'People are greatly mistaken 'in me,' he remarked on one occasion. 'A notion goes 'about that when I am silent, I mean to be impudent ; 'but I assure you, gentlemen, my silence proceeds from 'bashfulness.' From the same cause proceeded the unconsidered talk which was less easily forgiven than silence ; with which we shall find so frequently mixed up the imputation of vanity and envy ; and to properly comprehend which there must always be kept in mind the grudging and long-delayed recognition of his genius. Exceptions no doubt there were. Johnson, Burke, and Reynolds, were large exceptions ; and with what excellent effect upon his higher nature a sense of his growing fame with such men as these descended, will be plainly hereafter seen. Never is success obtained, if deserved, that it does not

open and improve the mind; and never had Goldsmith reason to believe the world in any respect disposed to do him justice, that he was not also most ready and desirous to do justice to others. But even with the friends I have named, remained too much of the fondness of pity, the familiarity of condescension, the air of generosity, the habit of patronage; too readily did these appear to justify an ill-disguised contempt, a sort of corporate spirit of disrespect, in the rest of the men of letters of that circle; and when was the applause of even the highest, yet counted a sufficient set-off against the depreciation of the lowest of mankind?

No one who thus examines the whole case can doubt, I think, that Goldsmith had never cause to be really content with his position among the men of his time, or with the portion of celebrity at any period during his life assigned to him. All men can patronise the useful, since it so well caters for itself; but as many as there are to need the beautiful, there are few to set it forth, and fewer still to encourage it; and even the booksellers who crowded round the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield* and the *Traveller*, came to talk but of booksellers' drudgery and catchpenny compilations. Is it strange that as such a man stood amid the Boswells, Beatties, Bickerstaffes, Murphys, Grahams, Hawkinses, and men of that secondary class, unconscious comparative criticism should have risen in his mind, and taken the form of a very innocent vanity? It is a harsh word, yet often stands for a harmless thing. May it not even be forgiven him if, in galling moments of slighting disregard, he made

occasional silent comparison of *Rasselas* with the *Vicar*, of the *Rambler* with the *Citizen of the World*, of *London* with the *Traveller*? ‘Doctor, I should be glad to see you at ‘Eton,’ said one of the Eton masters and author of an indifferent *Musque of Telemachus*, as he sat at supper with Johnson and Goldsmith, indulging somewhat freely in wine, and arrived at that pitch in his cups, when he gave this invitation, of looking at one man and talking to another. ‘I shall be glad to wait upon you,’ answered Goldsmith. ‘No, no,’ replied Graham: ‘’tis not you ‘I mean, Doctor *Minor*; ’tis Doctor *Major*, there.’ ‘Now, that Graham,’ said Goldsmith afterward, ‘is a fellow to make one commit suicide;’ and upon nothing graver than expressions such as this, have men like Hawkins inferred that he loved not Johnson but rather envied him for his parts. ‘Indeed,’ pursues the musical knight, ‘he once entreated a friend to desist from praising ‘him; “for in doing so,” said he, “you harrow up my “soul:”’ which it may be admitted was not at all improbable, if it was Hawkins praising him; for there is nothing so likely as a particular sort of praise to harrow up an affectionate soul. Such most certainly was Goldsmith’s, and he loved with all his grateful heart whatever was loveable in Johnson. Boswell himself admits it, on more than one occasion; and contradicts much of what he has chosen to say on others, by the remark that in his opinion Goldsmith had not really more of envy than other people, but only talked of it freely.

That free talking did all the mischief. He was candid and simple enough to say aloud, what others would more prudently have concealed. 'Here's such a stir,' he exclaimed to Johnson one day, in a company at Thrale's (it was when London had gone mad about Beattie's common-place *Essay on Truth*, had embraced the author as 'the long-delayed avenger of insulted Christianity,' and had at last treated, flattered, and caressed him into a pension of £200 a-year): 'here's such a stir about a fellow that has written one book, and I have written many.' 'Ah, Doctor!' retorted Johnson, on his discontented, disregarded, unpensioned friend; 'there go two-and-forty sixpences, you know, to one guinea:' whereat the lively Mrs. Thrale claps her hands with delight, and poor Goldsmith can but sulk in a corner. Being an author, it is true, he had no business to be thus thin-skinned, and should rather have been shelled like a rhinoceros; but a stronger man than he was, might have fretted with the irritation of such doubtful wit, and been driven to even intemperate resentment. Into that he never was betrayed. With all that at various times, and in differing degrees, depressed his honest ambition, ruffled his pride, or invaded his self-respect, it will on the whole be very plain, by the time this narrative has closed, that no man more thoroughly, and even in his own despite, practised those gracious and golden maxims with which Edmund Burke this very year rebuked the hasty temper of his protégé Barry, and which every man should take for ever to his heart. 'Who can live in the world without

‘some trial of his patience?’ asked the statesman of the young painter, who had fallen into petty disputes at Rome. And then he warned him that a man can never have a point of mere pride that will not be pernicious to him; that we must be at peace with our species, if not for their sakes, yet very much for our own; and that the arms with which the ill dispositions of the world are to be combated, and the qualities by which it is to be reconciled to us and we reconciled to it, are moderation, gentleness, a little indulgence to others, and a great deal of distrust of ourselves; ‘which are not qualities of a mean spirit, as some may possibly think them, but virtues of a great and noble kind, and such as dignify our nature as much as they contribute to our fortune and repose.’

Well would it have been for the subject of this biography, if the same justice which the world thus obtained from him, throughout their chequered intercourse, he had been able to obtain either from or for himself. It has not hitherto been concealed that, in whatever respect society may have conspired against him, he is not clear of the charge of having aided it by his own weakness; and still more evident will this be hereafter. With the present year ended his exclusive reliance on the booksellers, and, as though to mark it more emphatically, his old friend Newbery died; but with the year that followed, bringing many social seductions in the train of the theatre, came a greater inability than ever to resist improvident temptation and unsuitable expense. His old habit of living merely

from day to day beset every better scheme of life; the difficulty with which he earned money had not helped to teach him its value; and he became unable to apportion wisely his labour and his leisure. The one was too violent, and the other too freely indulged. It is doubtful if the charge of gambling can be to more than a very trifling extent supported: but in the midst of poverty he was too often profuse, into clothes and entertainments he threw money that should have liquidated debts, and he wanted courage and self-restraint to face the desperate arrears that still daily mounted up against him. Hardly a new resource that did not bring a new waste, and fresh demands upon his jaded powers.

But before we too sternly pronounce upon genius sacrificed thus, and opportunities thrown away, let the forty years which have been described in this biography; the thirty of unsettled habit and undetermined pursuit, the ten of unremitting drudgery and desolate toil; be calmly retraced and charitably judged. Nor let us omit from that consideration the nature to which he was born, the land in which he was raised, his tender temperament neglected in early youth, the brogue and the blunders which he described as his only inheritance; and when the gains are counted up which we owe to his genius, be it still with admission of its native and irreversible penalties. His generous warmth of heart, his transparent simplicity of spirit, his quick transitions from broadest humour to gentlest pathos, and that delightful buoyancy of nature



which survived in every depth of misery ; who shall undertake to separate these from the Irish soil in which they grew, in which impulse still reigns predominant over conscience and reflection, where unthinking benevolence yet passes for considerate goodness, and the gravest duties of life are overborne by social pleasure, or sunk in mad excitement. Manful, in spite of all, was Goldsmith's endeavour, and noble its result. He did not again draw back from the struggle in which at last he had engaged ; unaided by a helping hand, he fought the battle out ; and much might yet have been retrieved when death arrived so suddenly. Few men live at present, properly speaking ; but are preparing to live at another time, which may or may not arrive. The other time was cut from under Goldsmith ; and out of such labour as his in the present, few men could have snatched time to live. ' Ah ! ' he exclaimed to a young gentleman of fortune, who shewed him a most elaborate manuscript : ' Ah, Mr. Cradock ! think of me, ' that must write a volume every month ! ' Think of him, too, who wrote always in the presence of craving want, and from his life's beginning to its end had never known the assistance of a home. It was said of Burke that his every care used to vanish, from the moment he entered under his own roof ; of himself he could say no better than that at home or abroad, in crowds or in solitude, he was still carrying on a conflict with unrelenting care.

But one friend he had that never wholly left him, that in his need came still with comfort. Nature, who smiled

upon him in his cradle, in this 'garret' of Garden Court had not deserted him. Her school was open to him even here; and in the crowd and glare of streets, but a step divided him from her cool and calm refreshments. Among his happiest hours were those he passed at his window, looking over into the Temple Gardens. Steam and smoke were not yet so all prevailing, but that, right opposite where he looked, the stately stream which washes the garden-foot might be seen, as though freshly 'weaned from her Twicken-ham Naiades,' flowing gently past. Nor had the benchers thinned the trees in those days; for they were that race of benchers loved of Charles Lamb, who refused to pass in their treasurer's account 'twenty shillings to the gardener 'for stuff to poison the sparrows.' So there he sat with the noisy life of Fleet Street shut out, and made country music for himself out of the noise of the old Temple rookery. Luther used to moralize the rooks; and Goldsmith had illustrious example for the amusement he now took in their habits, as from time to time he watched them. He saw the rookery, in the winter deserted, or guarded only by some five or six, 'like old soldiers in a garrison,' resume its activity and bustle in the spring; and he moralized, like the great reformer, on the legal constitutions established, the social laws enforced, and the particular castigations endured, 'for the good of the community,' by those black-dressed and grey-eyed chatterers. 'Often has their plan 'of policy amused me,' he says, 'as I observed it from my 'window in the Temple, that looks upon a grove where

'they have made a colony.' Nor will we doubt that from this wall-girt grove, too, came many a thought that carried him back to childhood, made him free of solitudes explored in boyish days, and re-peopled deserted villages. It was better than watching the spiders amid the dirt of Green Arbour Court; for though his grove was city planted, and scant of the foliage of the forest, there was Fancy to piece out for him, transcending these, far other groves and other trees,

Annihilating all that 's made  
To a green thought in a green shade.

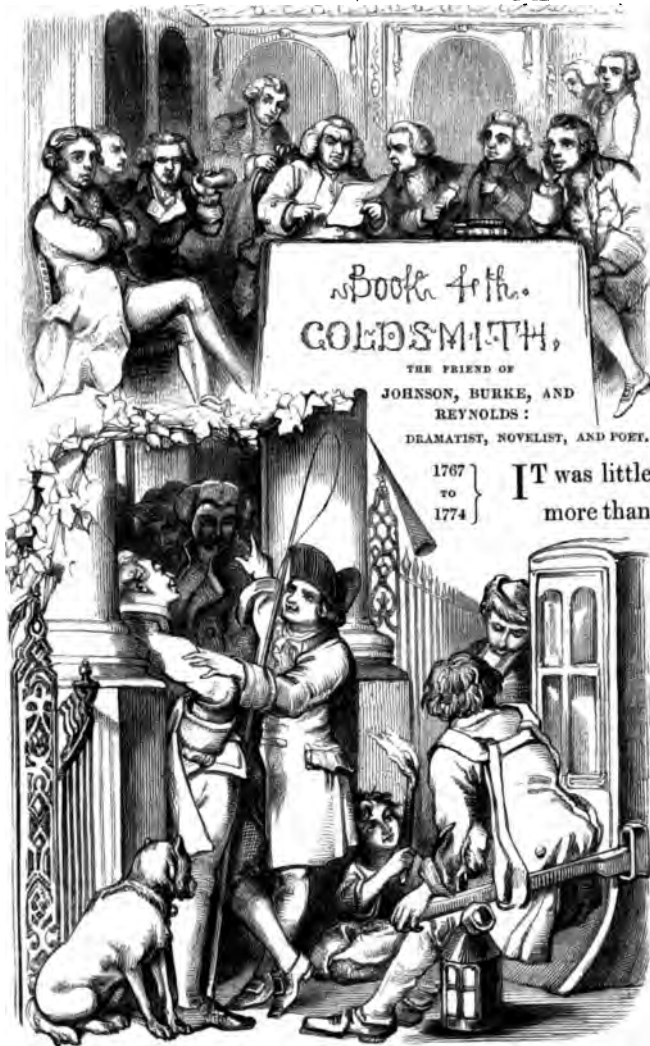
Let us leave him to this happiness for a time; before we pass to the few short years of labour, enjoyment, and sorrow, in which his mortal existence closed.



END OF THIRD BOOK.

**BOOK THE FOURTH.**





Book of the  
GOLDSMITH,

THE FRIEND OF  
JOHNSON, BURKE, AND  
REYNOLDS:

DRAMATIST, NOVELIST, AND POET.

1767  
TO  
1774

IT was little  
more than

a month before the death of the elder Newbery, that Burke read the comedy of the *Good-natur'd Man*; and thus, with mirth and sadness for its ushers, the last division of Goldsmith's life comes in. The bond of old and long-continued service, chequered as its retrospect was with mean and mortifying incidents, could hardly, without some regret, be snapped; nor could the long-attempted trial of the theatre, painful as its outset had been, without some sense of cheerfulness and hope approach its consummation. Newbery died on the 22nd of December, 1767; and the performance of the comedy was now promised for the 28th of the following January.

Unavailingly, for special reasons, had Goldsmith attempted to get it acted before Christmas. Quarrels had broken out among the new proprietary of the theatre, and these were made excuses for delay. Colman had properly insisted on his right, as manager, to cast the part of *Imogen* to Mrs. Yates, rather than to a pretty-faced simpering lady (Mrs. Lesingham) whom his brother proprietor, Harris, 'protected;' and the violence of the dispute became so notorious, and threatened such danger to the new management, that the papers describe Garrick 'growing taller' on the strength of it. Tall enough he certainly grew, to overlook something of the bitterness of Colman's first desertion of him; and civilities, perhaps arising from a sort of common interest in the issue of the Lesingham dispute, soon after recommenced between the rival managers. Bickerstaff (a clever and facile Irishman, who had, ten years

before, somewhat suddenly thrown up a commission in the Marines, taken to theatrical writing for subsistence, and since obtained repute as the author of *Love in a Village* and the *Maid of the Mill*) was just now pressing Colman with his opera of *Lionel and Clarissa*; and in one of his querulous letters, seems to point at this resumption of intercourse with Garrick, whom he had himself offended by beginning to write for Colman. 'You told me,' he complains, writing on the 26th January, 1768, 'that the 'end of January would be the best time of the year for me, 'and told me that Mr. Goldsmith's play should come out 'before Christmas. . . The fact is, you broke your word 'with me, in ordering the representation of the *Good-natur'd Man* in such a manner, as that it must unavoidably interfere with my opera. . . At the reading, it was 'said that the *Good-natur'd Man* should appear the 'Wednesday after; but at the same time it was whispered 'to me, that it was privately determined not to bring it out 'till the Saturday fortnight, *and there was even a promise 'given to Mr. Kelly that it should not appear till after 'his nights were over.'*

If such a promise had been given (and circumstances justify the suspicion), Goldsmith had better reason than has been hitherto supposed, for that dissatisfaction with Colman and difference with Kelly which attended the performance of his comedy. Kelly had been taken up by Garrick, in avowed and not very generous rivalry to himself; it was the town talk, some weeks before either performance



took place, that the two comedies, written as they were by men well known to each other and who had lived the same sort of life, were to be pitted against each other; and so broadly were they opposed in character and style, that the first in the field, supposing it well received, could hardly fail to be a stumbling-block to its successor. Kelly had sounded the depths of sentimentalism. I have glanced at the origin of that school as of much earlier date; nor can it be doubted that it was with Steele the unlucky notion began, of setting comedy to reform the morals, instead of imitating the manners of the age. Fielding slyly glances at this, when he makes Parson Adams declare the *Conscious Lovers* to be the only play fit for a Christian to see, and as good as a sermon; and in so witty and fine a writer as Steele, so great a mistake is only to be explained by the intolerable grossness into which the theatre had fallen in his day. For often does it happen in such reaction, that good and bad suffer together; and that while one has the sting taken out of it, the other loses energy and manhood. Where a sickly sensibility overspreads both vice and virtue, we are in the right to care as little for the one as for the other; since it is Life that the stage and its actors should present to us, and not anybody's moral or sentimental view of it. A most masterly critic of our time, Hazlitt, has disposed of Steele's pretensions as a comic dramatist; and poor Kelly, who has not survived to our time, must be disinterred to have his pretensions judged: yet the stage continues to suffer,

even now, from the dregs of the sentimental school ; and it would not greatly surprise me to see the comedy with which Kelly's brief career of glory began, again lift up a sickly head amongst us.

It is not an easy matter to describe that comedy. One can hardly disentangle, from the maze of cant and make-believe in which all the people are involved, what it precisely is they drive at ; but the main business seems to be, that there are three couples in search of themselves throughout the five acts, and enveloped in such a haze or mist of *False Delicacy* (the title of the piece) that they do not, till the last, succeed in finding themselves. There is a Lord who has been refused, for no reason on earth, by a Lady Betty who loves him ; and who, with as little reason and as much delicacy on his own side, transfers his proposals to a friend of Lady Betty's whom he does not love, and selects her ladyship to convey the transfer. There is Lady Betty's friend, who, being in love elsewhere, is shocked to receive his lordship's proposals ; but, being under great obligations to Lady Betty, cannot in delicacy think of opposing what she fancies her ladyship has set her heart upon. There is a mild young gentleman, who is knocked hither and thither like a shuttlecock ; now engaged to this young lady whom he does not love, now dismissed by that whom he does ; and made at last the convenient means of restoring, with all proper delicacy, Lady Betty to his lordship. There is a young lady who in delicacy ought to marry the mild young gentleman, but indelicately prefers

instead to run away with a certain Sir Harry. There is Sally her maid, who tells her mistress that she has transported her poor Sally 'by that noble resolution' (to run away). And there is the delicate old Colonel her father, who plays caves-dropper to her plan of flight; intercepts her in the act of it; gives her in the midst of her wickedness £20,000 (which he pulls out of a pocket-book), because he had promised it when she was good; and tells her to banish his name eternally from her remembrance, and be as happy as she can with the consciousness of having broken an old father's heart. There are only two people in the play with a glimmering of common sense or character; an eccentric widow, and a slovenly old bachelor; who are there to do for the rest what the rest have no power to do for themselves; and, though not without large infusions of silly sentimentality and squeamish charity, to bring back enough common sense to furnish forth a catastrophe. It is the most mechanical of contrivances: yet it is the proof, if any were wanting, that such a piece has no life in itself; and it is the distinguishing quality, which, thanks to Mr. Kelly's example, in proportion as reality or character is absent from a modern comedy, will still be found its chief resource. Examples need not be cited. Mr. Kelly's style will never want admirers. While it saves great trouble and wit to both actor and author, it exacts of an audience neither judgment nor discrimination; and with an easy, indolent indulgence of such productions, there will always be mixed up a sort of secret

satisfaction in their mouthing morals and lip professions of humanity.

Let us not be so hard on our grandfathers and grandmothers for having taken so mightily to Mr. Kelly's *False Delicacy*, as not to admit thus much. It had every advantage, too, in its production. Garrick not only wrote a prologue and epilogue, and was said to have heightened the old bachelor played by King, but went out of his way to induce Mrs. Dancer to forgive the abuse of *Thespis* and act the widow. Produced on Saturday the 23rd of January, it was received with such singular favour that, though the management was under a solemn pledge 'not for the future to run any new piece nine nights successively,' it was played eight nights without intermission, and in the course of the season repeated more than twenty times: the publisher announced, the morning after its publication, that three thousand copies of it had been sold before two o'clock; so unabated did its interest continue, that it had sold ten thousand before the season closed, Kelly had received a public breakfast at the Chapter Coffee House, and its publisher had expended twenty pounds upon a piece of plate as a tribute to his genius; it was translated into German, and (by order of the Marquis de Pombal) into Portuguese, while its French translation, by Garrick's lively friend Madame Riccoboni, had quite a run in Paris: and to sum up all in a word, *False Delicacy* became the rage.

Poor Goldsmith may be forgiven if the sudden start of such success a little dashed his hopes at the last rehearsals

of his *Good-natur'd Man*. Colman had lost what little faith he ever had in it ; Powell protested he could do nothing with *Honeywood* ; Harris and Rutherford had objected from the first : nor, with the exception of Shuter, were the actors more hopeful than the management. Goldsmith always remembered this timely good opinion of the excellent comedian, and the praise proffered him by a pretty actress (Miss Wilford, just become Mrs. Bulkley) who played *Miss Richland*. What stood him most in stead, however, was the unwavering kindness of Johnson, who not only wrote the prologue he had promised, but went to see the comedy rehearsed : and as, some half-century before, Swift had stood by Addison's side at the rehearsal of his tragedy, wondering to hear 'the drab that played Cato's daughter' laughing in the midst of her passionate part, and crying out *what next ?* one may imagine the equal wonder with which the kind-hearted sage by Goldsmith's side heard the mirth he so heartily admired, and had himself so loudly laughed at, rehearsed with doleful anticipations. The managerial face lengthened in proportion as the fun became broad ; and when, against the strongest remonstrance, it was finally determined to retain the scene of the bailiffs, Colman afterwards told his friends that he had lost all hope.

The eventful night arrived at last ; Friday the 29th of January. It was a club night (the day of meeting having been altered from Monday somewhat earlier than I formerly stated) ; and a majority of the members, following Johnson's

and Burke's example, attended the theatre. Cooke, the young law-student already referred to as Goldsmith's neighbour in the Temple, and whom he had lately introduced to his Wednesday's club, was also present ; and has spoken of what befell. Mr. Bensley, a stage lover of portentous delivery, seems to have thrown into the opening of Johnson's prologue,

Prest by the load of life, the weary mind  
Surveys the general toil of human kind,

a ponderous gloom, which, at the outset, dashed the spirits of the audience. Nor did Mr. Powell's *Honeywood* mend matters much, with the opening of the play. He had complained, at the rehearsals, that the part gave him 'no opportunity of displaying his abilities ;' and this it now became his care to make manifest. 'Uniform tameness, not to say insipidity,' was his contribution to the illustration of *Honeywood*. 'He seemed, from the beginning to the end, to be a perfect disciple of Zeno.' Shuter, on the other hand, going to work with *Croaker* after a different fashion, soon warmed the audience into his own enjoyment, and shocked the sentimentalists among them with the boisterous laughter he sent ringing through the house ; nor was he ill seconded by the *Lofty* of Woodward, another excellent comedian, the effect of whose 'contemptuous patronage' of *Honeywood* was long remembered. But then came the bailiffs ; on whom, being poorly acted, and presenting no resistance that way, the disaffected party were able to take full revenge for what they thought the

indelicacy of all such farcical mirth. Accordingly, when good *Mr. Twitch* described his love for humanity, and *Little Flanigan* cursed the French for having made the beer three-pence half-penny a pot, Cooke tells us that he heard people in the pit cry out this was 'low' ('language uncommonly low,' said the worthy *London Chronicle* in its criticism), and disapprobation was very loudly expressed. The comedy, in short, was not only trembling in the balance, but its tendency was decisively adverse, when Shuter came on with the 'incendiary letter' in the last scene of the fourth act, and read it with such inimitable humour that it carried the fifth act through. To be composed at so truly comic an exhibition, says Cooke, 'must have exceeded all power of face; even the rigid moral-mongers joined the full-toned roar of approbation.' Poor Goldsmith had, meanwhile, been suffering exquisite distress; had lost all faith in his comedy, and in himself; and, when the curtain fell, could only think of his debt of gratitude to Shuter. He hurried round to the green-room, says Cooke; 'thanked him in his honest, sincere manner, before all the performers;' and told him 'he had exceeded his own idea of the character, and that the fine comic richness of his colouring made it almost appear as new to him as to any other person in the house.' Then, with little heart for doubtful congratulations, he turned off to meet his friends in Gerrard Street.

By the time he arrived there, his spirits had to all appearance returned. He had forgotten the hisses. The

members might have seen that he eat no supper, but he chatted gaily as if nothing had happened amiss. Nay, to impress his friends still more forcibly with an idea of his magnanimity, he even sung his favorite song, which he never consented to sing but on special occasions, about *An Old Woman tossed in a Blanket seventeen times as high as the Moon*; and was altogether very noisy and loud. But some time afterward, when he and Johnson were dining with Percy at the chaplain's table at St. James's, he confessed what his feelings had this night really been, and told how the night had ended. 'All the while,' he said, 'I was suffering horrid tortures; and verily believe that if I had put a bit into my mouth it would have strangled me on the spot, I was so excessively ill; but I made more noise than usual to cover all that, and so they never perceived my not eating, nor, I believe, at all imaged to themselves the anguish of my heart. But when all were gone except Johnson here, I burst out a-crying, and even swore by — that I would never write again.' Johnson sat in amazement while Goldsmith made the confession, and then confirmed it. 'All which, Doctor,' he said, 'I thought had been a secret between you and me; and I am sure I would not have said anything about it, for the world.' That is very certain. No man so unlikely as Johnson, when he had a friend's tears to wipe away, critically to ask himself, or afterwards discuss, whether or not they ought to have been shed; but none so likely, if they came to be discussed by others, to tell



you how much he despised them. What he says must thus be taken with what he does; in all his various opinions of Goldsmith more especially. When Mrs. Thrale asked him of this matter, he spoke of it with contempt, and said that 'no man should be expected to sympathise with the 'sorrows of vanity.' But he *had* sympathised with them, at least to the extent of consoling them. Goldsmith never flung himself in vain, on that great, rough, tender heart. The weakness he did his best to hide from even the kindly Langton, the humane and generous Reynolds, was sobbed out freely there; nor is it difficult to guess how Johnson comforted him. 'Sir,' he said to Boswell, when that ingenious young gentleman, now a practising Scotch advocate, joined him a month or two later at Oxford, and talked slightly of the *Good-natur'd Man*; 'it is the best comedy that has appeared 'since the *Provok'd Husband*. There has not been of late 'any such character exhibited on the stage as that of '*Croaker*. Sir, *False Delicacy* is totally devoid of character.' Who can doubt that Goldsmith had words of reassurance at the least as kindly as these to listen to, as he walked home that night from Gerrard Street with Samuel Johnson?



Nor were other and substantial satisfactions wanting. His comedy was repeated with increased effect on the removal of the bailiffs, and its announced publication excited considerable interest. Griffin was the publisher; paid him £50 the day after its appearance; and in announcing a new edition the following week, stated that the whole of the first 'large impression' had been sold on the second day. But perhaps Goldsmith's greatest pleasure in connection with the printed comedy was, that he could 'shame the rogues' and print the scene of the bailiffs. Now-a-days it is difficult to understand the objection which condemned it, urged most strongly, as we find it, by the coarsest writers of the time. When such an attempt as *Honeywood's* to pass off the bailiffs for his friends, gets condemned as unworthy of 'a gentleman,' Comedy seems in sorry plight indeed. 'The town will not bear Goldsmith's low humour,' writes the not very decent Hoadley (the bishop's brother) to Garrick, 'and justly. It degrades his good-natur'd man, whom we were taught to pity and have a sort of respect for, into a low buffoon; and, what is worse, into a falsifier, a character unbecoming a gentleman.' Happily for us, Goldsmith printed the low humour notwithstanding. It had been cut out in the acting, he said, in deference to the public taste, 'grown of late, perhaps, too delicate;' and was now replaced in deference to the judgment of a few friends, 'who think in a particular way.' The particular way became more general when his second comedy laid the ghost of sentimentalism; and one is glad to know that,

though it was but the year before his death, he saw his well-beloved bailiffs restored to the scene, of which they have ever since been the most popular attraction. With the play, the prologue of course was printed; and here, too, Goldsmith had another satisfaction, in the alteration of a line that had been laughed at. 'Don't call me *our* 'LITTLE *bard*' he said to Johnson; and 'our anxious bard' was good-naturedly substituted. But what Boswell interposes on this head simply shows us how uneasy he was, not when Johnson's familiar diminutives, more fond than respectful, were used by himself, but when they passed into the mouths of others. 'I have often desired Mr. Johnson 'not to call me Goldy,' was his complaint to Davies. It was a courtous way of saying, 'I wish *you* wouldn't call 'me Goldy, whatever Mr. Johnson does.'

The comedy was played ten consecutive nights: their majesties commanding it on the fifth night (a practice not unwise, though become unfashionable); and the third, sixth, and ninth, being advertised as appropriated to the author. Shuter gave it an eleventh night, a month later, by selecting it for his benefit; when Goldsmith, in a fit of extravagant good nature, sent him ten guineas (perhaps the last he had at the time) for a box ticket. It was again, after an interval of three years, played three nights; and it was selected for a benefit the second year after that, when the bailiffs reappeared. This is all I can discover of its career upon the stage while the author yet lived to enjoy it.

Its success, in other respects, very sensibly affected his ways of life. His three nights had produced him nearly £400; Griffin had paid him £100 more; and for any good fortune of this kind, his past fortunes had not fitted him. So little, he would himself say, was he used to receive money 'in a lump,' that when Newbery made him his first advance of twenty guineas, his embarrassment was as great as *Captain Brazen's* in the play, whether he should build a privateer or a play-house with the money. He now took means hardly less effective to disembarass himself of the profits of his comedy. 'He descended 'from his attic story in the Staircase, Inner Temple,' says Cooke (who here writes somewhat hastily, one descent from the 'attic' having already been made), 'and purchased 'chambers in Brick Court, Middle Temple, for which he 'gave four hundred pounds.' They were No. 2 on the second floor, on the right hand ascending the staircase; and consisted of three reasonably sized rooms, which he furnished handsomely, with 'Wilton carpets,' 'blue marine' mahogany sofas, blue marine curtains, chairs corresponding, chimney glasses, Pembroke and card tables, and tasteful book-shelves. Thus, and by payment for the lease of the chambers, the sum Cooke mentions would seem to have been expended; and with it began a system of waste and debt, involving him in difficulties 'he never surmounted.' The first was in the shape of money borrowed from Mr. Edmund Bott, a barrister who occupied the rooms opposite his, on the same floor; who remained very intimate with

him for the rest of his life; and whose *Poor Laws treatise* is supposed to have received revision and improvement from him. Exactly below Goldsmith's were the chambers of Mr. Blackstone; and the rising lawyer, at this time finishing the fourth volume of his *Commentaries*, is reported to have made frequent complaint of the distracting social noises that went on above. A Mr. Children succeeded him, and made the same complaint.

The nature of the noises may be presumed from what is said on the authority of a worthy Irish merchant settled in London (Mr. Seguin), to two of whose children Goldsmith stood godfather; and whose intimacy with the poet descended as an heirloom to his family, by whom every tradition of it has been carefully cherished. They spoke to Mr. Prior of other Irish friends (Mr. Pollard, of Castle Pollard, and his wife) who visited London at this time, and were entertained by Goldsmith. They remembered dinners at which Johnson, Percy, and Bickerstaff, were guests. They talked of supper parties with younger people, as well in the London chambers as in suburban lodgings; preceded by blind-man's buff, forfeits, or games of cards; and where Goldsmith, festively entertaining them all, made frugal supper for himself off boiled milk. They related how he would sing all kinds of Irish songs; with what special enjoyment he gave the Scotch ballad of *Johnny Armstrong* (his old nurse's favourite); how cheerfully he would put the front of his wig behind, or contribute in any other way to the general amusement; and to what

accompaniment of uncontrollable laughter he 'danced a minuet with Mrs. Seguin.' Little of the self-satisfied importance which Boswell is most fond of connecting with him, is to be discovered in recollections like these.

And they are confirmed by Cooke's more precise account of scenes he witnessed at the Wednesday's club, where Goldsmith's more intimate associates seem now to have attempted to restrain the too great familiarity he permitted to the humbler members. An amusing instance is related. The fat man who sang songs had a friend in a certain Mr. B., described as a good sort of man and an eminent pig-butcher; who piqued himself very much on his good fellowship with the author of the *Traveller*, and whose constant manner of drinking to him was, 'Come, Noll, here's my service to you, old boy!' Repeating this one night after the comedy was played, and when there was a very full club, Glover went over to Goldsmith, and said in a whisper that he ought not to allow such liberties. 'Let him alone,' answered Goldsmith, 'and you'll see how civilly I'll let him down.' He waited a little; and on the next pause in the conversation, called out aloud, with a marked expression of politeness and courtesy, 'Mr. B., I have the honor of drinking your good health.' 'Thanke'e, thanke'e, Noll,' returned Mr. B., pulling the pipe out of his mouth, and answering with great briskness. 'Well, where's the advantage of your reproof?' asked Glover. 'In truth,' remarked Goldsmith, with an air of good-humoured disappointment, intended to give greater force

to a stroke of meditated wit, 'I give it up; I ought to have known before now, there is no putting a pig in the right way.'

The same authority informs us of liberties not quite so harmless as Mr. B.'s, and wit quite as flat as Goldsmith's, practised now and then on the poet for more general amusement, by the choicer spirits of the Globe. For example, he had come into the club-room one night, eager and clamorous for his supper, having been out on some 'shooting party,' and taken nothing since the morning. The wags were still round the table, at which they had been enjoying themselves, when a dish of excellent mutton chops, ordered as he came in, was set before the famishing poet. Instantly one of the company rose, and went to another part of the room. A second pushed his chair away from the table. A third showed more decisive signs of distress, connecting it with the chops in a manner not to be mistaken. 'How the waiter could have dared to produce such a dish,' was at last the reluctant answer to Goldsmith's alarmed enquiries: 'the chops were offensive; the fellow ought to be made to eat them himself.' Anxious for supper as he was, the plate was at once thrust from him; the waiter violently summoned into the room; and an angry order given that he should try to make his own repast of what he had so impudently set before a hungry man. The waiter, now conscious of a trick, complied with affected reluctance; and Goldsmith, more quickly appeased than enraged, as his wont was, ordered a fresh supper for himself, 'and a dram

‘for the poor devil of a waiter, who might otherwise get  
‘sick from so nauseating a meal.’

Before I pass from these humble records of the Wednesday’s club, it will be proper to mention Kelly’s withdrawal from it. Alleged attacks by Goldsmith on his comedy having been repeated to him with exaggeration: such as a remark, on being told of the contemplated foreign translations, that except for the booths of foreign fairs they were little likely to be required; and an impetuous refusal to write again for the stage, while such trash as *False Delicacy* continued to attract audiences: he resolved to resent the unfriendliness. What the exact character of their friendship had been, I cannot precisely ascertain; but though recent, it had probably for a time been intimate. Kelly succeeded Jones as editor of the *Public Ledger*, and the mutual connexion with Newbery must have brought them much together; nor is it difficult to believe the report of which I have found several traces, that but for Kelly’s sensible remonstrance on the prudential score, his wife’s sister, who lived in his house (as pretty and as poor as his wife, being simply as she had been, an expert and industrious needlewoman), would have been carried off and wedded by Goldsmith. Since their respective comedies they had not met; when, abruptly encountering each other one night in the Covent Garden green-room, Goldsmith stammered out awkward congratulations to Kelly on his recent success, to which the other, prepared for war, promptly replied that he could not thank him



because he could not believe him. 'From that hour they never spoke to one another:' and Kelly, reluctant that Goldsmith should be troubled to 'do anything more for him,' resigned the club. The latter allusion was (by way of satire) to a story he used to tell of the terms of Goldsmith's answer to the first dinner invitation he had given him. 'I would with pleasure accept your kind invitation,' so ran the whimsical and very pardonable speech, 'but to tell you the truth, my dear boy, my *Traveller* has found me a home in so many places, that I am engaged, I believe, three days. Let me see: to-day I dine with Edmund Burke, to-morrow with Doctor Nugent' (again with Burke, that is, for he and his father-in-law then lived together), 'and the next day with Topham Beauclerc: but I'll tell you what *I'll do for you*, I'll dine with you on Saturday.' Now Kelly, though conceited and not very scrupulous, was not an ill-natured man, on the whole: he wrote a novel called *Louisa Mildmay*, which, with some scenes of a questionable kind of warmth, an ill-natured man could not have written: but he was not justified in the tone he took during this quarrel, and after it. It was not for him to sneer at Goldsmith's follies, who was for nothing more celebrated than his unconscious imitations of them; who was so fond, in his little gleam of prosperity, of displaying on his sideboard the plate he possessed, that he added to it his spurs; and who, even as he laughed at his more famous countryman's Tyrian bloom and satin, was displaying his own corpulent little person at all public places

in 'a flaming broad silver-laced waistcoat, bag-wig, and sword.'

Mr. William Filby's bill marks the 21st of January as the day when the 'Tyrian bloom satin grain, and garter blue silk breeches' (charged £8. 2s. 7d.) were sent home; doubtless the suit ordered for the comedy's first night. Within three months, Mr. Filby having meanwhile been paid his previous year's account by a draft on Griffin, another more expensive suit ('lined with silk, and gold buttons') was supplied; and in three months more, the entry on the same account of 'a suit of mourning,' furnished on the 17th of June, marks the period of Henry Goldsmith's death. At the close of the previous month, in the village of Athlone, had terminated, at the age of forty-five, that brother's life of active piety and humble but noble usefulness, whose unpretending Christian example, far above the worldlier fame he had himself acquired, his brother's genius has consecrated and preserved for ever. Shortly after he had tidings of his loss, the character of the Village Preacher was most probably written; for certainly the lines which immediately precede it were composed about a month before. From his father and his brother alike, indeed, were drawn the exquisite features of this sketch; but of the so recent grief we may find marked and unquestionable trace, as well in the sublime and solemn image at the close, as in those opening allusions to Henry's unworldly contentedness, which already he had celebrated, in prose hardly less beautiful, by the dedication to the



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Truth from his lips prevail'd, with honest ease,  
 And fools, who came to scoff, remained to praise.  
 The service past, arriv'd the poor man,  
 With steady zeal, each honest trade he try'd,  
 Even children follow'd, with unobscur'd zeal,  
 And pluck'd his gown, to share the good that fell;  
 His ready smile a parent's warmth express'd,  
 Their welfare pleas'd him, and their noise distress'd.  
 To them his heart, his love, his griefs were known,  
 But all his serious thoughts had rest in Heaven,  
*As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,  
 Scells from the vale, and mirrors in its frown,  
 Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,  
 Eternal sunshine settles on its head.*

The idea of the *Deserted Village* was thrown out at the close of the *Traveller*,

(Have we not seen, at pleasure's lordly call,  
 The smiling long-frequented village fall?  
 Beheld the duteous son, the sire decay'd,  
 The modest matron, and the blushing maid,  
 Fore'd from their homes. . .)

and on the general glad acceptance of that poem he had at once turned his thoughts to its successor. The subject of the growth of trade and opulence in *England*, of the relation of labour to the production of wealth, and of the advantage of its position, or its reference to maritime commerce, or its connection with the agriculture, which, two years after the *Traveller* was published, was one of the most important subjects of the day, and which, two years after the *Traveller* was published, was one of the most important subjects of the day, and which, two years after the *Traveller* was published, was one of the most important subjects of the day.

grown out of early impressions; were passionately responded to, by the warmer sensibilities of his nature; and had received supposed corroboration from his own experience. He told Sir Joshua Reynolds that for four or five years before the *Deserted Village* was published, he had, by sundry country excursions into various parts of England, verified his fears of the tendency of overgrowing wealth to depopulate the land; and his remark to a friend who called upon him the second morning after he commenced the poem, was nearly to the same effect. 'Some of my friends differ with me on this plan,' he said, after describing the scheme, 'and think this depopulation of villages does not exist; but I am myself satisfied of the fact. I remember it in my own country, *and have seen it in this.*'

The friend who so called upon him, in May 1768; who marks the date as exactly two years before the poem appeared; and who tells us that the writing of it, and its elaborate revision, extended over that whole interval of two years; was supposed by Scott to have been Lee Lewes the actor. It is difficult to understand how this mistake originated; but it would seem that Sir Walter had judged from only a small portion of the papers whose authorship he thus misstated, and which, except in apparently imperfect and garbled extracts, escaped even Goldsmith's later and more careful biographer. Acquaintance with the comedian had not yet begun; nor in the acknowledged (and somewhat dull) *Memoirs of Lee Lewes*, does the poet's name at any time occur: the real writer of the anecdotes was

Cooke, the young law student so often referred to as Goldsmith's countryman and near neighbour in the Temple; and their curious details, till now, have been almost wholly overlooked. They appeared from time to time in the *European Magazine*.

Cooke prefaces the mention of his calling on 'the Doctor' the second morning after the *Deserted Village* was begun, by an account of the Doctor's slowness in writing poetry, 'not from the tardiness of fancy, but the time he took in 'pointing the sentiments and polishing the versification.' An invaluable hint to the poetical aspirant, as already I have strongly urged. Indisputable wealth of genius, flung about in careless exuberance, has as often failed to make a poet, as one finished unsuperfluous masterpiece has succeeded, and kept a name in the *Collections* for ever. Goldsmith's manner of writing the *Deserted Village*, his friend tells us, was this: he first sketched a part of his design in prose, in which he threw out his ideas as they occurred to him; he then sat down carefully to verify them, correct them, and add such other ideas as he thought better fitted to the subject; and if sometimes he would exceed his prose design by writing several verses impromptu, these he would take singular pains afterward to revise, lest they should be found unconnected with his main design. Ten lines, from the fifth to the fifteenth, had been his second morning's work; and when Cooke entered his chamber he read them to him aloud.

Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,  
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,

How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,  
 Where humble happiness endear'd each scene !  
 How often have I paus'd on every charm,  
 The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm,  
 The never-failing brook, the busy mill,  
 The decent church that topp'd the neighbouring hill,  
 The hawthorn bush with seats beneath the shade  
 For talking age and whispering lovers made !

'Come,' he added, 'let me tell you this is no bad morning's work ; and now, my dear boy, if you are not better engaged, I should be glad to enjoy a *Shoemaker's Holiday* with you.'

This proposed enjoyment is then described by Cooke, in a simple, characteristic way. '*A Shoemaker's Holiday* was a day of great festivity to poor Goldsmith, and was spent in the following innocent manner. Three or four of his intimate friends rendezvoused at his chambers to breakfast about ten o'clock in the morning ; at eleven they proceeded by the City-road and through the fields to Highbury Barn to dinner ; about six o'clock in the evening they adjourned to White Conduit House to drink tea ; and concluded by supping at the Grecian or Temple Exchange Coffee Houses, or at the Globe in Fleet Street. There was a very good ordinary of two dishes and pastry, kept at Highbury Barn about this time at tenpence per head, including a penny to the waiter ; and the company generally consisted of literary characters, a few Templars, and some citizens who had left off trade. The whole expenses of this day's fête never exceeded a crown, and were oftener from three-and-sixpence to four shillings ; for which

‘ the party obtained good air and exercise, good living,  
 ‘ the example of simple manners, and good conversation.’



Truly, very innocent enjoyment ; and shared not alone by Templars and small wits, but by humbler good fellows. One Peter Barlow, who acted now and then as amanuensis to Goldsmith ; very poor, very proud in his way ; who appeared always in one peculiar dress ; who declared himself able to give only a specified small sum for his daily dinner, but who stood firmly on his ability to do this, and never permitted any one to do it for him ; had made himself a great favourite with Goldsmith by his honest independence and harmless eccentricity, and had generally a place in the *Shoemaker's Holiday*. If the dinner cost even five shillings each, fifteenpence was still the limit of Peter's responsibility ; and the balance was paid by Goldsmith. Many, too, were



his other pensioners, on less liberal terms than Peter. He had two or three poor authors always on his list, beside 'several widows and poor housekeepers;' and when he had no money to give the latter, he seldom failed to send them away with shirts or old clothes, sometimes with the whole contents of his breakfast table: saying with a smile of satisfaction after they were gone, 'Now let me only suppose 'I have eat a much heartier breakfast than usual, and I'm 'nothing out of pocket.' His last guinea, exclaims Cooke, after relating some stories of this kind, was the boundary of his munificence.

Yet Cooke was no enthusiast. He had rather, at the time these anecdotes were written, fallen into the Boswell way of talking of his old patron; and was careful to colour his picture, as though to adapt it for popular acceptance, with all due tints of vanity and folly. Unable to conceal, indeed, the pains he is at in doing this, his examples are often very amusing failures. One day, for instance, he tells us, Goldsmith being in company where many ladies were, and a ballad-singer happening to sing his favourite air of *Sally Salisbury* under the window, his envy and vanity broke out, and he exclaimed with some passion, 'How miserably this woman sings!' 'Pray, Doctor,' rejoined the lady of the house, 'could you do it better?' 'Yes, madam,' was the answer, amidst a general titter of distrust; 'and the company shall be judges.' He instantly began; when, adds Cooke, with a sort of naïve renewal of the wonder of the ladies, 'singing with some ear and

'no inconsiderable degree of pathos, he obtained the 'universal suffrages of the company.' I have spoken of the harmless forms of miscalled vanity and envy, which unconscious comparative criticism will sometimes breed; and surely this is but pleasant evidence of them. Nor did the narrator prove more successful when he professed to give instances of Goldsmith's folly. The poet of the *Pleasures of Memory*, interested in all that concerned the elder poet whose style he made the model for his own finished writings, knew Cooke well in the latter days of his life, and gives me curious illustration of the habit he then had fallen into when he spoke of his celebrated friend. 'Sir,' he said, on Mr. Rogers asking him what Goldsmith really was in conversation, 'he was a fool. The right 'word never came to him. If you gave him back a bad 'shilling, he'd say "Why it's as good a shilling as ever "' was *born*." You know he ought to have said *coined*. 'Coined, sir, never entered his head. He was a fool, sir.' It may be added, since the question of vanity and envy has again arisen here, that even Tom Davies, who talks more of his envious sallies than any one, tells us they were altogether childish, harmless, and absurd; that nothing but mirth was ever suggested by them; and that he never formed any scheme, or joined in any combination, to hurt any man living. A more important witness, too, gives yet more interesting testimony. Bishop Percy, who of all his distinguished friends had known him earliest, after stating that he was generous in the extreme; that

there never was a man more benevolent and friendly ; and that, so strongly was he affected by compassion, he had been known at midnight to abandon his rest, in order to procure relief and an asylum for a poor dying object, who was left destitute in the streets ; proceeds thus : ‘ He is, however, supposed to have been often soured by jealousy or envy ; and many little instances are mentioned of this tendency in his character : but whatever appeared of this kind was a mere momentary sensation which he knew not how, like other men, to conceal. It was never the result of principle, or the suggestion of reflection ; it never embittered his heart, nor influenced his conduct.’ Let these emphatic words be the comment on any future record of such ‘ little instances ;’ and when Johnson ridicules, hereafter, his friend’s ignorance of things, let it be taken with Cooke’s odd illustration of his supposed ignorance of words.

Henry Goldsmith’s death would seem to have been made known to his brother shortly before we discover the latter to have gone into temporary retreat in a cottage eight miles down the Edgware Road, ‘ at the back of Canons.’ He had taken it in connection with his Temple neighbour, Mr. Bott ; and they kept it for some little time. It was very small, and very absurdly decorated ; and, as a set off to his *Shoemaker’s Holiday*, he used to call this his *Shoemaker’s Paradise*, one of that craft having built it, and laid it out with flying Mercuries, *jettés d’eau*, and other preposterous ornaments, though the ground it stood upon, with its two

rooms on a floor, its garden and all, covered considerably less than half an acre. The friends would occasionally drive down to this retreat, even after dining in London, Mr. Bott being one of those undoubtedly respectable men who kept a horse and gig: and a curious letter is said to be in existence written by Goldsmith shortly before his death, thanking Bott again and again for timely pecuniary help, rendered in his worst straits; saying it is to Bott he entirely owes that he can sit down in safety in his chambers without the terrors of arrest hanging momentarily over him; and recalling such whimsical scenes of past days as when they used to drive down the Edgware Road at night, and, both their necks being brought to imminent peril by the gig's descent into a ditch, the driver (Bott) would exhaust all his professional eloquence to prove that at that instant they were exactly in the centre of the road.

Here the *History of Rome*, undertaken for Davies, was at leisure proceeded with; here the new poem, worked at in the adjoining lanes, and in pleasant strolls along the shady hedges, began to grow in importance; and here, so engaged, Goldsmith seems to have passed the greater part of the summer, apparently not much moved by what was going on elsewhere. Walpole, mourning for the loss of his Lady Hervey and his Lady Suffolk, was reading his tragedy of the *Mysterious Mother* to his lady friends who remained, and rejoicing that he did not need to expose himself to 'the impertinencies' of that jackanapes Garrick, who lets nothing appear but 'his own wretched stuff, or that of creatures still duller,

‘ who suffer him to alter their pieces as he pleases : ’ but Goldsmith’s withers are unwrung. Hume was receiving a considerable increase to his pension, with significant intimation of the royal wish that he should apply himself to the continuation of his *English History* ; great lords were fondly dandling Robertson into the good graces of the booksellers, the Chief Justice admiringly telling the Duke of Bedford that £4500 was to be paid him for his *Charles the Fifth History*, and Walpole reasonably sneering at this worship of Scotch puffing and partiality : but the humbler historian at Edgeware pursues his labours unbribed and undisturbed. The *Sentimental Journey* was giving pleasure to not a few ; even Walpole was declaring it ‘ infinitely preferable to the tiresome *Tristram Shandy* ; ’ while within a few months, at a grand dinner table round which were seated two dukes, two earls, Mr. Garrick, and Mr. Hume, a footman in attendance was announcing Sterne’s lonely death in a common lodging house in Bond Street : but Goldsmith does not yet see the shadow of his own early decay. Gray, who had in vain solicited the Oxford professorship of Modern History while he yet had the health it would have given him spirit to enjoy, and was now about to receive it from the Duke of Grafton when no longer able to hold it, was wondering at a new book about Corsica, in which he found a hero pourtrayed by a green goose, and where he had the comfort of feeling that what was wise in it must be true, for the writer was too great a fool to invent it : but Goldsmith has never been much interested in Boswell,

and Paoli is not very likely to increase his interest. Having made this unavailing effort to empty his head of Corsica, Boswell himself had visited London in the spring, had followed Johnson to Oxford, and was now making him the hero of dinner parties at the Crown and Anchor in the Strand, where Percy was worried, Robertson slighted, and Davies turned into ridicule: but Goldsmith is doubtless well content, for a time, to escape his chance of being 'tossed and gored.' Kindness he could not escape so easily, if Reynolds had it in his gift. For this, too, was the year when the great painter, entering the little room where a party of his brother artists were in council over a plan for an 'Academy of Arts,' was instantly, all of them rising to a man, saluted 'president;' and the year had not closed before the royal patronage was obtained for the scheme, and that great institution set on foot which has since so greatly flourished, yet has had no worthier or more famous entry on its records than the appointment of Samuel Johnson as its first Professor of Ancient Literature, and of Oliver Goldsmith as its first Professor of History.

Whether the clamour of politics, noisiest when emptiest, failed meanwhile to make its way into the *Shoemaker's Paradise*, may be more doubtful. A year of such profligate turmoil perhaps never degraded our English annals. The millenium of rioters as well as libellers seemed to have come. The abandoned recklessness of public men was seen in reaction through all the grades of society; and in the mobs of Stepney Fields and St. George's, were reflected

the knaves and bullies of White's and St. James's. Having glanced at the causes that had made inevitable some such consequence, it only remains to state it. The election for a new Parliament, the old one dying of its seventh year in March, let loose every evil element ; and Wilkes found his work half done before he threw himself into it. His defeat for London, his daring and successful attempt on Middlesex, his imprisonment pending the arguments on his outlawry, the result of those arguments, his election as Alderman, and clumsy alternations of rage and fear in his opponents, confirmed him at last the representative of Liberty ; and amid tumult, murder, and massacre, the sacred cap was put upon his head. Mobs assembled round his prison to offer him help, and succeeded so far as to involve Scotch soldiers, and their ministerial defenders, in firing fatally upon unarmed men. The laws seemed to have lost their terror, the magistracy their means of enforcing them. In one part of London there was a riot of Irish coal-heavers which lasted nine hours, and in which eighteen persons were killed, before the guards arrived upon the scene. The merchant sailors on the river rose to the number of four thousand, for an increase of wages ; and stopped outward-bound ships from sailing till their demands were compromised. The Thames watermen, to the best of their ability, followed the example ; so did the journeymen hatters, with what assistance they could give to the general confusion ; and even a riot of journeymen tailors threatened to be formidable, till

Sir John Fielding succeeded in quelling it. Walpole has connected these various disturbances with the 'favorable Wilkes season,' and tells us that in all of them was heard the cry of Liberty and its champion. Liberty by itself, to not a few of its advocates, seemed to have ceased to convey any meaning. 'I take the Wilkes-and-liberty to inform you,' wrote a witty merchant to his correspondents. It was now that Whitfield put up prayers for Wilkes before his sermons; that Dukes were made to appear in front of their houses and drink his health; that city voters in a modest way of trade, refused to give him their votes unless he'd take a gift of money as well, in one instance as much as £20; and that the most notoriously stately and ceremonious of all the ambassadors (the Austrian) was tumbled out of his coach head over heels, to have his heels chalked with *Number 45*. In the midst of a Wilkes mob the new houses met. 'Good God,' cried the Duke of Grafton, when the Duke of Richmond laughed at Lord Sandwich's proposition to send and see if the riots had ceased; 'is it matter for laughter when mobs come to join 'the name of Wilkes with the sacred sound of liberty!' The poor Duke saw none of the causes that had brought this about, nor dreamt of connecting them with the social disorganization all around: with the seat of government in daily disorder, Ireland insurrectionary, the colonies on the eve of rebellion, and the continent overbearing and arrogant; while to himself a woman or a horse-race had been first in the duties of life, and his allies the Bedfords, 'while



'each of them had his three thousand a-year and his three thousand bottles of claret and champagne,' were insensate and reckless of disgrace. The language of Walpole is not to be adopted to its full extent, it may be true, any more than that of the more terrible assailant who was now (with such signatures as Mnemon, Lucius, and Atticus) sharpening his nameless weapons for more fatal and enduring aim ; but in neither case is the desperate bitterness to be condemned as uncalled-for, simply because it involved individual injustice. The time had come when, even at the expense of individual suffering, it was well that such things should be thought and said ; and when it was fitting that public men, privately not unamiable or dishonest, should at length be made bitterly responsible for public wrongs, whether sanctioned or committed. Lord Chatham was no worshipper of the mob, but this year roused him from his apathy, and replumed his popular fame. He saw much of what at last was impending. In 'timber-merchants,' who began now to contest seats in the large cities against the Selwyns and men of the aristocratic families, he saw something more than 'd—d carpenters' who (according to Lord Carlisle) should be 'kept in their saw-pits.' A new power was about to make itself felt, and it found Chatham prepared. He withdrew his name from the Ministry, already reeling under the storm of Wilkes ; Shelburne soon after followed him ; Camden was not long in following Shelburne ; the poor Duke of Newcastle, inapt for new notions, sank into the grave with his old ones ; and young Charles James Fox,

for the first time, heard 'Mr. Burke' much talked about at his father's table. The latter incident may mark what the great families found it now no longer possible to ignore; though it is just as likely that the purchase of an estate induced the talk, as certain late fiery speeches in the house. Burke became this year a landed proprietor. With money bequeathed him by his father and brother, and with large help from Lord Rockingham (at once intended to requite service and render it more effective), he purchased an estate in Buckinghamshire called Gregories or Butlers Court, about a mile from the market town of Beaconsfield, and subsequently known by the latter name. Assisted as he was, the effort must have straitened his means; for in the following year he asks a loan of a thousand pounds from Garrick, which his 'dear David,' his 'dearest Garrick,' at once accords. The estate was twenty-four miles from London; and within a hundred yards of the house were the ruins of what had once been Waller's home. Gregories itself has since become a ruin, having been consumed by fire; but nobler memories than the old poet's are those that now linger round what once was the home of Edmund Burke, and Goldsmith has his share in them.

Exciting news at the Edgeware Cottage that Beaconsfield purchase must at least have been, though even the noise of Wilkes had failed to force an entrance there. In October, Goldsmith was again in the Temple, and is to be traced at his old haunts, and in the theatres. Somewhat later in the season that now began, Garrick brought out a

new tragedy, by Home; but so hateful had Wilkes again made the Scotch, that its author's name had to be suppressed, its own name anglicized, and a young English gentleman brought up from Oxford to the rehearsals, to personate the author. Goldsmith discovered the trick, and is said by Davies to have proposed a hostile party against the play; 'but this was the transient thought of a giddy man, who would as heartily have joined a party to support the piece.' It was probably renewed spleen at Garrick; whose recent patronage of Kenrick, for no apparent reason than his means of mischief and his continued abuse of more successful men, had not tended to oblivion of older offences. Kenrick's latest form of malice was the epigram; but the wit was less apparent than the venom, of connecting Goldsmith's with other names just now rife in the playbills.

What are your Britons, Romans, Grecians,  
 Compared with thorough-bred Milesians?  
 Step into Griffin's shop, he'll tell you,  
 Of Goldsmith, Bickerstaff, and Kelly. . .  
 And take one Irish evidence for t'other,  
 Ev'n Homer's self is but their foster-brother.

The last allusion was to a story the humbler wits were now telling against Goldsmith. Bickerstaff had invited a party to his house to hear one of his dramatic pieces read; and among the company were Goldsmith and one Paul Hiffernan, already mentioned as one of his Grub Street protégés, of the Purdon and Pilkington class. He was an eccentric, drunken, idle, Irish creature; educated for a

physician, and not without talents and even scholarship ; but a continual victim to what he called *impecuniosity*, and so unprovided with self-help against the disease, that he lived altogether upon the help of other people. *Where* he lived, however, nobody could ever find out : he gave his address at the Bedford ; and beyond that, curiosity was baffled, though many and most amusing were its attempts to discover more : nor was it till after his death that his whereabouts was found, in one of the wretched little courts out of St. Martin's Lane. He wrote newspaper paragraphs in the morning ; foraged for his dinner ; slept out the early part of the night in one of the theatres ; and, in return for certain critical and convivial displays which made his company attractive after play-hours, was always sure of a closing entertainment at the Black Lion in Russell Street, or the Cyder Cellar in Maiden Lane. Latterly, he had taken altogether to dramatic criticism, for which he had some talent (his earliest Irish efforts in that line, when he ought to have been practising his profession, had been thought mighty pleasant by Burke, then a lad at Dublin College) ; and this, with its usual effect upon the Drury Lane manager, had lately obtained him a sort of pension from Garrick. It was the great actor's worst weakness to involve himself thus with the meaner newspaper men ; and it was only this very year he was warned by a letter from Foote, of its danger in the case of Hiffernan. 'Upon the whole,' wrote that master in the art of literary libel (there is nothing like the voice of a Gracchus

for a good complaint against sedition), 'it is, I think, ' worthy of consideration, *whether there is not something ' immoral, as well as impolitic*, in encouraging a fellow, ' who, without parts, principles, property, or profession, ' has subsisted for these twenty years by the qualities of a ' literary footpad.' Precisely that newspaper jobbery it was, however, to whose success the absence of parts, principles, property, and profession is essential, which had procured Hiffernan his invitation to the reading of Bickerstaff's play. A good dinner precluded the reading; and much justice was done to this, and to the glass which circulated for half an hour afterward, by 'Hiff:' but his judgment, and enjoyment, of the play, were much less clearly evinced; and when the first batch of opinions were collected at the end of the first act, 'Very well, by —, very well!' was all that could be got from him. Alas for what followed! 'About the middle of the second act,' says the teller of the anecdote, 'he began to nod; and in a little time afterwards ' to snore so loud that the author could scarcely be heard. ' Bickerstaff felt a little embarrassed; but raising his voice, ' went on. Hiffernan's tones, however, increased; till at last ' Goldsmith could hold out no longer, but cried out, "Never ' " mind the brute, Bick! go on. So he would have served ' " Homer if he was here, and reading his own works."'

Nothing so easy for Kenrick as to turn this into a comparison of Bickerstaff to Homer; and no laugh was heartier than Garrick's at the new proof of Goldsmith's folly. But for his countenance of the libeller he was doomed to be

severely punished, and in connection with this very Bickerstaff. Some four years after the present date, that wretched man was driven from society with an infamous stain, and Kenrick grossly connected it by allusion with Garrick ; to whom at the very time, as we now know, the miserable culprit was writing from his hiding-place the most piteous petition for charity that one human being ever made to another. ('I remember that during the interval of my 'small prosperity, I presented you, at different times, with 'some trifles ; their value, I believe, might be about ten 'pounds: these would now feed and clothe me.') An action was commenced against the libeller, and dropped upon ample apology. 'I did not believe him guilty, but did it 'to plague the fellow,' said Kenrick to Thomas Evans. The worthy bookseller never spoke to him again.

Scoundrel as he was, it need not be denied that he had some cleverness. Johnson hit it off exactly when he described it as a faculty that made him *public*, without making him *known*. He used to lecture at the Devil and other taverns, on every conceivable subject, from Shakespeare to the perpetual motion, which he thought he had discovered ; having been, before he got his Scotch doctorship and became Griffiths's hack, a scale or rule-maker. Hence Johnson's quiet answer to his attack on the *Shakespeare*, that he could not consider himself 'bound by his rules;' and similar advice Johnson always gave to Goldsmith, the next most frequent object of his attack. 'Never 'mind, sir,' he would say, at some new venom (for nothing

escaped this Ishmael of criticism, not even the *Traveller*); 'a man whose business it is to be talked of, is much helped by being attacked. Fame, sir, is a shuttlecock: if it be struck only at one end of the room, it will soon fall to the ground; to keep it up, it must be struck at both ends.' So, too, Boswell remarking to him, four years after the present, that he thought Goldsmith the better for the attacks so frequently made upon him, 'Yes sir,' was the reply: 'but he does not think so yet. When Goldsmith and I published each of us something at the same time, we were given to understand that we might review each other. Goldsmith was for accepting the offer. I said, no, set reviewers at defiance.' Unhappily, his friend never could do this; and even the lesson of 'retaliation' was learnt too late. Kenrick remained, to the last, his evil genius; and it seems to have been with a sort of uneasy desire to propitiate, that Goldsmith yielded to Griffin's solicitation at the close of the present year, and consented to take part in the editing of a new *Gentleman's Journal* in which Kenrick was a leading writer, and for which Hiffernan, Kelly, and some others were engaged. It died soon after it was born; and on some one remarking to him what an extraordinary thing so sudden a death was, 'Not at all, sir,' he answered: 'a very common case; it died of too many Doctors.'

An amusing illustration which belongs nearly to this time, of inconvenience sometimes incurred from his Grub Street protégés and pensioners, will properly dismiss for

the present this worshipful company of Kenricks and Hiffernans. The hero of the anecdote had all the worst qualities of the tribe; and 'how do you think he served me,' said Goldsmith, relating the incident to a friend. 'Why, sir, after staying away two years, he came one evening into my chambers, half drunk, as I was taking a glass of wine with Topham Beauclerc and General Oglethorpe; and sitting himself down, with most intolerable assurance inquired after my health and literary pursuits, as if we were upon the most friendly footing. I was at first so much ashamed of ever having known such a fellow, that I stifled my resentment, and drew him into a conversation on such topics as I knew he could talk upon; in which, to do him justice, he acquitted himself very reputably: when all of a sudden, as if recollecting something, he pulled two papers out of his pocket, which he presented to me with great ceremony, saying, "Here, my dear friend, is a quarter of a pound of tea, and a half pound of sugar, I have brought you; for though it is not in my power at present to pay you the two guineas you so generously lent me, you, nor any man else, shall ever have it to say that I want gratitude." This,' added Goldsmith, 'was too much. I could no longer keep in my feelings, but desired him to turn out of my chambers directly; which he very coolly did, taking up his tea and sugar; and I never saw him afterwards.' Certainly Hogarth should have survived to depict this scene. None other could have given us the



fastidious face of Beauclerc, than whom no man ever showed a more uniform and even painful sense of the ridiculous, when the tea and sugar were produced.

Oglethorpe was a recent acquaintance, and has become, by the compliment of Pope and in the page of Boswell, an historical name. Now thirty years older than Goldsmith, he survived him full ten years: and to the last preserved that 'strong benevolence of soul' which connects his memory with the colonization of Georgia; as well as those Jacobite leanings which involved him in a court-martial after the affair of '15, and subsequently shelved him as a soldier. He entered Parliament, and distinguished himself as much by humane as by high tory crotchets. The sympathies which attracted him to Goldsmith, and continued their intimacy, appear in the commencement of the only letter that survives of their correspondence. 'How just, sir,' writes Oglethorpe, 'were your observations, that the poorest objects were by extreme poverty deprived of the benefit of hospitals erected for the relief of the poorest.' And he incloses five pounds for his friend to distribute as he may think proper. Nor were they without the other point of agreement which had attracted Oglethorpe to Johnson. For Goldsmith, though the social bearing of politics always interested him most, and he cared little at any time for its party questions, had something of a half-fanciful Jacobite leaning, dabbled now and then in Jacobite opinions, and was as ready for a hit at the 'Hanoverian rat' as Johnson himself. An anecdote of their stroll one day into Westminster Abbey, has preserved

pleasant record of this. They stood together in Poets' Corner;



corner; surveyed the dead but sceptred sovereigns that there, from storied urn and monumental bust, still rule and glorify the world; and the natural thought probably rose to the minds of both, 'perhaps our names, too,

will one day be mingled with theirs.' Johnson broke the silence, and whispered the hope in a Latin verse,

' Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis.'

They walked away from the Abbey together, and arrived at Temple Bar; where the ghastly remains of the last Jacobite execution were still rotting on the spikes above; and where, till not long before, people had made a trade of letting spy-glasses 'at a halfpenny a look.' Here Goldsmith



stopped Johnson, pointed up, and slyly returned his whisper,

' Forsitan et nostrum . . miscebitur Istris.'

With the opening of 1769, we find Goldsmith busily engaged upon new projects, his *Roman History* completed; and it was now, Percy tells us, that Johnson took him to Oxford, and obtained for him, *ad eundem*, the degree of M.B. The fact must rest on the bishop's authority; for the present Oxford registrar, though disposed to think it correct, finds a chasm in the University register which leaves it without positive corroboration. They were at this time much together, it is certain; and if Johnson's opinion of the genius of Goldsmith was now at its highest, it was repaid with very hearty affection. 'Look,' said Gray, as in walking this year with a friend through a crowded street of the city, he saw a large uncouth figure 'polling' before them: 'look, look, Bonstetten, the Great Bear! 'There goes Ursa Major!' It was Johnson. 'Ah!' said Goldsmith, when such expressions were repeated to him, 'they may say that. Johnson, to be sure, has a roughness of manner, but no man alive has a more tender heart. 'He has nothing of the bear but his skin.' Their entertainer at Oxford was the accomplished lawyer, Chambers, at this time Vinerian Professor, and five years later a judge in India; in whose rooms his more celebrated townsman Scott (both were Newcastle men) was afterwards introduced to Johnson, and who had lately been admitted a member of the Gerrard Street Club.

His election took place on the resignation of Hawkins; and it seems doubtful if I have not, in a former page, antedated Percy's election. The records of the early years of

the Club are, in truth, so scanty and imperfect, that it is difficult to ascertain the simplest fact in connection with it. But it is certain that the original number of ten had now been enlarged to twelve ; and, as a result of the resignation of Hawkins, and of Beauclerc's forfeiture by continued non-attendance, four vacancies had to be filled. To the first Percy was elected ; the second was re-claimed by Beauclerc (whose recent marriage with Lady Di Spencer, on her divorce from Lord Bolingbroke, sufficiently explained his temporary withdrawal) ; and the third and fourth were filled by Chambers and George Colman. It was on the occasion of this slight increase that Goldsmith seems to have urged the expediency of a larger infusion of new men : ' it would give the Club an agreeable variety,' he thought ; ' there could now be nothing new among the ' members, for they had travelled over each other's minds.' This nettled Johnson ; being too much in his own way. ' Sir,' he said, ' you have not travelled over my mind, I ' promise you.' Nevertheless Reynolds agreed with Goldsmith, thinking that life wanted colour and diversity as much as his own canvasses ; and immediately before Goldsmith died, the number was increased to twenty : but from that time Johnson took little interest in the meetings. Almost all the rising men of the day were Whigs (*bottomless* Whigs, as he called Burke) ; and the spectacle of Charles Fox in the chair, quoting *Homer* and *Fielding* to the astonishment of Joe Wartou, was one he could not get reconciled to. Within three years, he was himself

the advocate of a yet further increase to thirty; and the form the Club then assumed was precisely what he wished to bring it to: 'a mere miscellaneous collection of conspicuous men, without any determinate character.' So, to the present day, it has continued.

Colman's election seemed a studied slight to Garrick, but his claim was not inconsiderable. It was a choice between rival managers and rival wits; eager little figures both; both social and most agreeable men; and the scale was easily turned. Langton describes a Club incident soon after Colman's admission. He says that Goldsmith, on the occasion of a play brought out by Mrs. Lennox (a very ingenious, deserving, and not very fortunate woman, who wrote the clever novel of the *Female Quixote*, and a somewhat silly book about Shakespeare, to which Johnson, a great friend of hers, was suspected to have contributed), told Johnson at the Club that a person had advised him to go and hiss it, because she had attacked Shakespeare in her book called *Shakespeare Illustrated*. 'And did you not tell him,' returned Johnson sharply, 'that he was a rascal?' 'No, sir,' said Goldsmith, 'I did not. Perhaps he might not mean what he said.' 'Nay, sir,' was the reply, 'if he lied, it is a different thing.' Colman was sitting by while this passed; and dropping his voice out of Johnson's hearing, silyly remarked to Langton, 'Then the proper expression should have been, *Sir, if you don't lie, you're a rascal.*' The play was produced at Colman's theatre with the title of the *Sister*, and encountered so

strong an opposition that it was never repeated : but that the audience was not impartial, may be suspected from Langton's anecdote ; and it is borne out by a reading of the comedy itself. Though with too much sentiment, it is both amusing and interesting ; and the Strawberry Hill critics who abused it, and afterwards pronounced Burgoyne's *Heiress* 'the finest comedy in the English language,' might have had the justice to discover that three of the characters of the fashionable General were stolen from this very *Sister* of poor Mrs. Lennox. Goldsmith, however, had nothing to reproach himself with. He not only refrained from joining the dissentients, but assisted the comedy (perhaps first disposed to sympathy with it because Garrick had rejected it) by an epilogue written in his liveliest strain, and spoken by pretty Mrs. Bulkley. He has had few competitors in that style of writing. His prologues and epilogues are the perfection of the *vers de société*. Formality and ill-humour are exorcised by their cordial wit, which transforms the theatre to a drawing-room, and the audience into friendly guests. There is a playful touch, an easy, airy elegance, which, when joined to terseness of expression, sets it off with incomparable grace and finished beauty ; but few of our English poets have written that style successfully. The French, who invented the name for it, have been almost its only practised cultivators. Goldsmith's genius for it will nevertheless bear comparison with even theirs. He could be playful without childishness, humorous without coarseness, and sharply

satirical without a particle of anger. Enough remains, for proof, in his collected verse ; but in private letters that have perished, many most charming specimens have undoubtedly been lost. For with such enchanting facility it flowed from him, that with hardly any of his friends in the higher social circle which he now began to enter, did it fail to help him to more gracious acceptance, to warmer and more cordial intimacy. It takes but the touch of nature to please highest and lowest alike : and whether he thanked Lord Clare, or the manager of Ranelagh ; answered an invitation to the pretty Miss Hornecks, or supplied author or actor with an epilogue ; the same exquisite tact, the same natural art, the same finished beauty of humour and refinement, recommended themselves to all.

The Miss Hornecks, girls of nineteen and seventeen, were acquaintances of this year ; and soon ripened into friends. They were the daughters of Mrs. Horneck, Captain Kane Horneck's widow ; whose Devonshire family connected her with Reynolds, and so introduced her to Goldsmith. Her only son Charles, the *Captain in Lace* as they now fondly called him, had entered the Guards in the preceding year, and seems to have been as cordial and good-natured, as her daughters were handsome and young. The eldest, Catherine, *Little Comedy* as she was called, was already engaged to Henry William Bunbury (second son of a baronet of old family in Suffolk, whose elder son Charles had lately succeeded to the title), who is still remembered as '*Geoffrey Gambado,*' and as one of the cleverest amateur

artists and social caricaturists of his day. The youngest, Mary, had no declared lover till a year after Goldsmith's death, nor was married till three years after that engagement, to Colonel Gwyn; but already she had the loving nick-name of the *Jessamy Bride*, and exerted strange fascination over Goldsmith. Heaven knows what impossible dreams may at times have visited the awkward, unattractive man of letters! But whether at any time aspiring to other regard than his genius and simplicity might claim, at least for these the sisters heartily liked him; and perhaps the happiest hours of the later years of his life were passed in their society. Burke, who was their guardian, tenderly remembered in his premature old age the delight they had given him from their childhood; their social as well as personal charms are uniformly spoken of by all; and when Hazlitt met the younger sister in Northcote's painting-room some twenty years ago (she survived *Little Comedy* upwards of forty years, and died little more than seven years since!), she was still talking of her favourite Doctor Goldsmith, with recollection and affection unabated by time. Still, too, she was beautiful, beautiful even in years. The Graces had triumphed over age. 'I could almost fancy the shade of Goldsmith in the room,' says Hazlitt, 'looking round with complacency.'

Soon had the acquaintance become a friendship. To a dinner-party given this year by their mother's friend and Reynolds's physician, Doctor (afterwards Sir George) Baker, the sisters appear at the last moment to have taken



on themselves to write a joint invitation to Goldsmith, to which he replied with some score of humorous couplets, at the top of which was scrawled, 'This *is* a poem! This *is* a copy of verses!'

Your mandate I got,  
 You may all go to pot;  
 Had your senses been right,  
 You 'd have sent before night...  
 So tell Horneck and Nesbitt,  
 And Baker and his bit,  
 And Kauffman beside,  
 And the *Jessamy Bride*,  
 With the rest of the crew,  
 The Reynoldses two,

*Little Comedy's* face,  
 And the *Captain in Lace*...  
 Tell each other to rue  
 Your Devonshire crew,  
 For sending so late  
 To one of my state.  
 But 'tis Reynolds's way  
 From wisdom to stray,  
 And Angelica's whim  
 To be frolick like him;

But, alas! your good worships, how could they be wiser  
 When both have been spoil'd in to-day's *Advertiser*!

Does not this life-like humour re-furnish the hospitable table, re-animate the pleasant circle around it, and set us down again with Reynolds and his Angelica? The most celebrated of the woman painters had found no jealousy in the leading artist of England. His was the first portrait that made Angelica Kauffman famous here; to him she owed her introduction to the Conways and Stanhopes; he befriended her in the misery of her first thoughtless marriage, now not many months dissolved, though himælf (it was said) not unmoved by tenderer thoughts than of friendship; and he placed her in the list of the members of the new Academy. It was little wonder that their names should have passed together into print, and become a theme for the poet's corner of the *Advertiser*.

In the same number of that journal was an advertisement of the *Roman History*, which had been first announced in the preceding August, and was issued in the May of the present year. It was in two octavo volumes of five hundred pages each, was described as for the use of schools and colleges, and obtained at once a very large sale. What he has given as his reason for writing it, that other histories of the period 'were either too voluminous for common use, 'or too meanly written to please,' will suffice to explain its success. It was a compact and not a big book, and it was charmingly written. The critics received it well; and one of them had the grace to regret that 'the author of 'one of the best poems that has appeared since those of 'Mr. Pope, should not apply wholly to works of imagination.' Johnson thought, on the other hand, that the writer's time had been occupied worthily; and when, a year or two after this, in a dinner conversation at Topham Beauclerc's, he was putting Goldsmith in the first class, not only as poet and comic writer but also as historian, and Boswell exploded a protest in behalf of the Scotch writers of history, Johnson more decisively roared out his preference for his friend over 'the verbiage of Robertson and the 'foppery of Dalrymple.' Hume he had never read, because of his infidelity; but Robertson, he protested, might have put twice as much into his book as he had done, whereas Goldsmith had put into his as much as the book would hold. This, he affirmed, was the great art: for the man who tells the world shortly what it wants to know, will,

with his plain full narrative, please again and again ; while the more cumbrous writer, still interposing *himself* before what you wish to know, is crushed with his own weight, and buried under his own ornaments. ‘Goldsmith’s abridgement,’ he added, ‘is better than that of Lucius Florus or Eutropius ; and I will venture to say that if you compare him with Vertot, in the same places of the *Roman History*, you will find that he excels Vertot. Sir, he has the art of compiling, and of saying everything he has to say, in a pleasing manner. He is now writing a *Natural History*, and will make it as entertaining as a Persian Tale.’

For this *Natural History* the first agreement dates as early as the close of February in the present year, five years before it was completed and published. It is made between Griffin and Goldsmith : and stipulates that the history is to be in eight volumes, each containing upwards of four hundred pages in pica ; that for each, a hundred guineas are to be paid on its delivery in manuscript ; that ‘Doctor Goldsmith is to set about the work immediately, and to finish the whole as soon as he conveniently can ;’ and that ‘if the work makes less than eight volumes the Doctor is to be paid in proportion.’ Soon after the agreement the book was begun, but it was worked at in occasional intervals only ; for when the first month’s sale of the *Roman History* had established its success, Davies tempted him with an offer of five hundred pounds for a four volume *History of England* (to be ‘written and compiled in the space of two years ;’ but not to be paid for

till delivered, and 'the printer has given his opinion that 'the proper quantity is written'), and this later labour superseded the earlier. There is no reason to believe that any money was advanced on the *English History*; and the discovery of the specific agreement enables us to test the truth of one of Miss Hawkins's most delicate anecdotes. She says that soon after Goldsmith had contracted with the booksellers for this particular compilation, for which he was to be paid five hundred guineas, he went to Mr. Cadell and told him he was in imminent danger of being arrested; that Cadell immediately called a meeting of the proprietors, and prevailed on them to advance him a considerable part of the sum, which, by the original agreement, he was not entitled to till a twelvemonth after the publication of his work; and that on a day which Mr. Cadell had named for giving the needy author an answer, Goldsmith came and received the money, under pretence of instantly satisfying his creditors; whereupon Cadell, to discover the truth of his pretext, watched whither he went, and after following him to Hyde Park Corner, saw him get into a postchaise, 'in which a woman of the town was waiting for him, with 'whom, it afterwards appeared, he went to Bath to dissipate 'what he had thus fraudulently obtained.' It has been seen that Cadell had nothing to do with the matter; and it may be presumed that the good-natured lady's other facts rest on as slender a foundation.

Nevertheless, it would be idle to deny the charge of dissipation altogether. It is clear that with the present

year he passed into habits of needless expense ; used the influence of a popularity which was never higher than now, to obtain means for their thoughtless indulgence ; and involved himself in responsibilities which at last overwhelmed him. He exchanged his simple habits, says Cooke, for those of the great ; he commenced quite a man of lettered ease and consequence ; he was obliged to run into debt ; ‘and his debts rendered him at times so melancholy and dejected, that I am sure he felt himself a very ‘unhappy man.’ One of these sad involvements occurred in the autumn ; when, being pressed for some portion of the loan expended on his chambers, he exacted from Griffin an advance of five hundred guineas for the first five volumes of the *Natural History*, which the bookseller was obliged to make up by disposing of shares to other booksellers, and which Goldsmith had wholly expended before half-a-dozen chapters were written. For he had laid the subject aside to go on with his *English History* ; though not unwarned of the unpopularity the latter might involve him in, so mad was the excitement of the time. Would he be a Hume or a Mrs. Macauley ? He would be neither, he said ; he objected equally to both.

Against Party it is certain that Goldsmith always set himself, and it was the theme on which he joined Johnson against Burke ; but he differed from Johnson in this, that in real truth he went with neither faction. Yet surely, if ever even faction could be invested with a something manly and defensible, it was now. The most thoughtful, the most

retired, the least excitable of men, were suddenly aroused to some interest in it. A friend of Gray relates that he had an appointment to meet the poet at his lodgings in Jermyn Street, and found him so deeply plunged in the columns of a newspaper (which with his dinner had been sent him from a neighbouring tavern), that his attention was with difficulty drawn from it. 'Take this,' said he, in a tone of excitement; 'here is such writing as I never before saw in a newspaper.' It was the first letter with the signature of *Junius*. But it was not what now we must associate with *Junius*; not the reckless calumnies and scandals, not the personal spites and hatreds; not such halting liberalism as his praise to the taxation of America, and his protest against the disfranchisement of Old Sarum; which then so completely seized upon the reason as well as temper of men. It was the startling manifestation of power and courage; the sense that unscrupulous ministers had now an unscrupulous enemy; that here was knowledge of even the worst chicaneries of office, which not the most sneering official could make light of; that no minister in either house, no courtier at St. James's, no obsequious judge at Westminster, no supercilious secretary in any of the offices, could hereafter feel *himself* safe from treachery and betrayal; and that what hitherto had been a vulgar half-articulate cry from the Brentford hustings, or at best, a faint whisper imperfectly echoed from St. Stephens, was now made the property and enjoyment of every section of the people: of the educated by its exquisite

polish, of the vulgar by its relish of malice, of the great middle-class by its animated plainness, vigorous shrewdness, and dogged perseverance. 'I *will* be heard,' cried Burke in the House of Commons, in the course of what he wittily called the fifth act of the tragi-comedy acted by his majesty's servants for the benefit of Mr. Wilkes, at the expense of the constitution: 'I *will* be heard. I will throw open those doors and tell the people of England that when a man is addressing the chair on their behalf, the attention of the speaker is engaged.' . . . but 'great noise and members talking' were too much for even that impetuous spirit; he was *not* heard; nor till the publication of Sir Henry Cavendish's *Notes* six years since, had the English people any detailed means of knowing what had passed in the most exciting debates ever known within their house. But the gap was filled by *Junius*. By those celebrated letters, reprinted and circulated in every possible shape, the people were made parties, in its progress, to much of what was doing in St. Stephens; in the house itself, the popular element was made of greater practical importance; the democratic spirit throughout the country was strengthened; and the right of the newspapers to report the debates was at last secured.

Horace Walpole, hopeless of his cousin Conway for a premier, had left politics now; but he saw all this, and saw it with alarm. To meet this year at the same dinner-table the Duc de Rochefoucault and Mrs. Macauley (whose statue the Rector of St. Stephens Walbrook had just set

up in the chancel of his church), was, to poor Horace, significant of evil. Yet when he went to Paris a month or two later, and could not get into the Louvre for the crowds that were flocking to see Madame Dubarry's portrait at the *Exposition*, he did not seem to see evil impending : he could only wonder that the French should adore the monarch that was starving them ; and when the Revolution *did* come, was ready to tear his periwig with horror. Unhappily, little things and great things too often affected him, or escaped him, in exactly the same proportion, to the sad misuse of his brilliant talents ; and it was with this Gray pleasantly reproached him, when, after quiet sarcastic enjoyment of the Paris moralities, he blazed up with so much heat against poor Garrick's Stratford Jubilee. Why so tolerant of Dubarrydom, and so wrathful at Vanity Fair ?

The great actors at the Jubilee in Shakespeare's honour made a three days' wonder of it (the 6th, 7th, and 8th of September), and then came back to town. Neither Johnson nor Goldsmith had joined them : but among them were Colman, representing his theatre (in place of poor Powell, who had died suddenly at Bristol two months before) ; Foote, laughing at everything going forward ; several of Garrick's noble friends, dukes, earls, and aristocratic beauties ; and last, not least, Mr. Boswell ' in a Corsican ' habit, with pistols in his belt, and a musket at his back, ' and in the front of his cap, in gold letters, these words, ' PAOLI AND LIBERTY.' He had written a poem for recitation at the masquerade, to which the crowd refused to



listen ; but he brought it up to London, fired it off in the newspapers, and had the singular satisfaction of presenting it to Paoli himself, who arrived in London not many days after his admirer. The patriot's struggle having ended in the defeat and absorption of Corsica, he was content to subside into a civil dangler at St. James' with a pension of a thousand a-year ; and probably laughed as heartily as anybody when Boswell now appeared in a full suit of black, with ' Corsica ' exposed in legible letters on his hat, as the dear defunct he was in mourning for. Nor did the fit abate for some time. It was not till several months later that the old laird of Affleck (so was Auchinleck familiarly called) had occasion to make his famous complaint to a friend. ' There 's nae hope for Jamie, mon. Jamie is gaen clean ' gyte. What do you think, mon ? He 's done wi' Paoli ; ' he 's off wi' the land-louping scoundrel of a Corsican ; ' and whose tail do you think he has pinn'd himself to ' now, mon ? A *dominie*, mon ; an auld dominic: he kepted ' a schüle, and cau'd it an acaadamy.' But though not yet exclusively pinned to the auld dominie's tail, Jamie so far abated his ostentatious attendance on the land-louping Corsican as to revive some of the old nights at the Mitre, and to get up some dinners and drinking parties at his rooms in Old Bond Street. One of the dinners was fixed for the 16th of October ; and the party invited were Johnson, Reynolds (now knighted as the president of the Royal Academy), Goldsmith, Garrick, Murphy, Bickerstaff, and Tom Davies.

But some days before it took place, an incident occurred

of no small interest to that circle. One of Johnson's early acquaintance was the Italian Baretti, a man of cynical temper and overbearing manners, but also of undoubted ability, who had been useful to him at the time of the *Dictionary*, and whose services had never been forgotten. To Goldsmith, on the other hand, this man had made himself peculiarly hateful, by all that malice in little, which, on a larger field, he subsequently practised against poor Mrs. Thrale; and they never seem to have met but to quarrel. Their mutual dislike is described by Davies. 'Goldsmith, least of all mankind, approved Baretti's conversation; he considered him an insolent foreigner: as Baretti, in his turn, thought the other an unpolished man, and an absurd companion.' It now unhappily fell out, however, that in a street scuffle Baretti drew out a fruit knife which he always carried, and killed a man (one of three who had grossly insulted him, on his somewhat rudely repulsing the overtures of a woman with whom they were proved to be connected); and it further happened that Goldsmith was among the first to hear of the incident next morning, while Baretti was under examination before Sir John Fielding. The good-natured man forgot all his wrongs in an instant; thought only of his enemy's evil plight; and hurried off to render him assistance. 'When this unhappy Italian,' says Davies, 'was charged with murder, and sent by Sir John Fielding to Newgate, Goldsmith opened his purse, would have given him every shilling it contained; and at the same time insisted upon going in the coach with him to

‘the place of his confinement.’ Bail was given before Lord Mansfield a few days later; and never were such names, before or since, proffered in connection with such a charge. They were Reynolds, Fitzherbert, Burke, and Garrick. All the friends met to arrange the defence; and it was at one of the consultations, on a hot dispute arising between Burke and Johnson, that the latter afterwards frankly admitted, ‘Burke and I should have been of one opinion if we had had no audience.’ Baretti was acquitted, though not without merited rebuke; and Johnson subsequently obtained for him the post of tutor in the family of the Thrales, and Reynolds that of honorary foreign secretary to the new Academy.

But Mr. Boswell’s dinner is waiting us. On that very day (as Mr. Prior, who discovered Mr. William Filby’s bills, enables us with commendable correctness to state), Goldsmith’s tailor took him home ‘a half-dress suit of ratteen lined with satin, a pair of silk stocking breeches, and a pair of bloom-coloured ditto’ (for which the entire charge was about sixteen pounds); and to Old Bond Street the poet would seem to have proceeded in ‘silk attire.’ Though he is said to have been last at every dinner party, arriving always in a violent bustle just as the rest were sitting down, when he arrived on this occasion there was still a laggard: but Garrick and Johnson were come, and Boswell pleasantly relates with what good humour they had met; how Garrick played round Johnson with a fond vivacity, taking hold of the breasts of his coat, and, as he

looked up in his face with a lively archness, complimenting him on the good health which he seemed then to enjoy, while the sage, shaking his head, beheld him with a gentle



complacency. Dinner continued to be kept waiting however; and, says Boswell, 'Goldsmith, to divert the tedious minutes, strutted about bragging of his dress, and I believe was seriously vain of it, *for his mind was wonderfully prone to such impressions.*' Of course Boswell had no such weakness, any more than Horace Walpole, also a great laughter on the same score. Though the one had so lately figured in Corsican costume, and was so proud of his ordinary dress that he would show printers' devils his new ruffles and sword; though the other had just received a

party of French visitors at Strawberry in elaborate state, presenting himself at the gate in a 'cravat of Gibbons's carving' and a pair of James the First gloves embroidered up to the elbows: both thought themselves entitled to make the most of poor Goldsmith's 'bragging'; and Garrick, however good the humour he might be in, had always his laugh in equal readiness. 'Come, come,' he said, 'talk 'no more of that. You are perhaps the worst . . . eh, eh!' Goldsmith eagerly attempted to interrupt him. 'Nay,' continued Garrick, laughing ironically, 'nay, you will always 'look like a gentleman; but I am talking of being well or 'ill *drest*.' 'Well,' answered Goldsmith, with an amusing simplicity which makes the anecdote very pleasant to us, 'let 'me tell you, when my tailor brought home my bloom-'coloured coat he said, "Sir, I have a favour to beg of you. " "When any body asks you who made your clothes, be " "pleased to mention John Filby, at the Harrow in Water " "Lane."'" 'Why, sir,' remarked Johnson, 'that was because he knew the strange colour would attract crowds to 'gaze at it, and thus they might hear of him, and see how 'well he could make a coat, even of so absurd a colour.' Crowds *have* been attracted to gaze at it, and Mr. Filby's bloom-coloured coat defies the ravages of time!

How the party talked after dinner may be read in Boswell; in all whose reports, however, the confessed object is to give the talk of only one speaker, with such limited fragments of remark from others as may be necessary in elucidation of the one. Thus there are but two sentences

preserved of Goldsmith's; both sensible enough, though both of them indications that he was not disposed to accept all Johnson's criticism for gospel. He put in a word for Pope's character of Addison, as 'showing a deep knowledge of the human heart,' while Johnson was declaring (quite justly) that in Dryden's poetry were passages drawn from a profundity which Pope could never reach; and he quietly interposed, when Johnson took to praising Lord Kaimes's *Elements of Criticism*, that it must have been easier to write that book 'than it was to read it.' Poor Boswell himself came off very ill at this dinner, as at several other meetings before he returned to Scotland; being compared to Pope's dunces, having his head called his peccant part, and receiving other as unequivocal compliments: so that he was fain to console himself with what he now heard Goldsmith (happily adapting an expression in one of Cibber's comedies) say of his hero's conversation. 'There is no arguing with Johnson; for when his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the butt-end of it.'

The nature of Goldsmith's employments at the close of 1769, are indicated in the advertising columns of the papers of the day. His *English History* occupied him chiefly, his *Natural History* occasionally; he had undertaken to write a life of his countryman, Parnell, for a new edition of his poems; and the speedy publication of the *Deserted Village* was twice announced in the *Public Advertiser*. But it was not published speedily. Still it was paused over, altered, polished, and refined. Bishop

Percy has mentioned the delightful facility with which his prose flowed forth unblotted with erasure, as a contrast to the labour and pains of his verse interlined with countless alterations ; but in prose, as in poetry, he aimed at the like effects, and obtained them. He knew that no picture will stand, if the colours are bad, ill-chosen, or indiscreetly combined; and that not chaos, but order is creation. It is a pity that men, though of perhaps greater genius, who have lived since his time, should not more deeply have pondered such lessons as his writings bequeath to us. It is a pity that the disposition to rush into print should be so general ; for few men have ever repented of publishing too late. Pope's method of sending forth a part of a poem one winter, and promising its completion for the winter following, would be laughed at now a days : yet extremely few are the thoughts 'conceived with rapture and with fire begot,' compared with those that may be carefully brought forth, becomingly and charmingly habited, and introduced by the Graces. Men of the more brilliant order of fancy and imagination should be always distrustful of their powers. Spar and stalactite are bad materials for the foundation of solid edifices.

The year 1770 opens with a glimpse into the old fireside at Kilmore. The Lauders do not seem to have communicated with him since his uncle Contarine's death ; and a legacy of £15, left him by that generous friend, remained unappropriated in their hands. His brother Maurice, still without calling or employment, and apparently living on

such of his relatives as from time to time were willing to afford him a home, seems to have heard this mentioned while he made one of his self-supporting visits, and to have straightway written to Oliver. The money would help him to an outfit, if his famous brother could help him to an appointment; and to express his earnest hopes in this direction, the letter was written. His sister Johnson wrote soon after for her husband, in a precisely similar strain; and to these letters his reply has been kept. It shows little change since earlier days. His Irish friends and family are as they then were. They do not seem to have answered many recent communications sent them; he now learns for the first time that Charles is no longer in Ireland; his brother-in-law, Hodson, has been as silent as the rest; and he sends Cousin Jenny his portrait, in memory of an original 'almost forgot.' The letter is directed to 'Mr. Maurice Goldsmith, at James Lauder's, Esq., at Kilmore, near Carrick-on-Shannon,' and bears the date of 'January 1770.'

"DEAR BROTHER, I should have answered your letter sooner, but in truth I am not fond of thinking of the necessities of those I love, when it is so very little in my power to help them. I am sorry to find you are every way unprovided for; and what adds to my uneasiness is, that I have received a letter from my sister Johnson, by which I learn that she is pretty much in the same circumstances. As to myself, I believe I could get both you and my poor brother-in-law something like that which you desire; but I am determined never to ask for little things, nor exhaust any little interest I may have, until I can serve you, him, and myself, more effectually. As yet no opportunity has offered, but I believe you are pretty well convinced



that I will not be remiss when it arrives. . The King has lately been pleased to make me professor of Ancient History in a Royal Academy of Painting, which he has just established, but there is no salary annexed, and I took it rather as a compliment to the institution, than any benefit to myself. *Honours to one in my situation, are something like ruffles to one that wants a shirt.* . You tell me that there are thirteen or fourteen pounds left me in the hands of my cousin Launder, and you ask me what I would have done with them. My dear brother, I would by no means give any directions to my dear worthy relations at Kilmore, how to dispose of money, which is, properly speaking, more theirs than mine. All that I can say is, that I entirely, and this letter will serve to witness, give up any right and title to it; and I am sure they will dispose of it to the best advantage. To them I entirely leave it; whether they or you may think the whole necessary to fit you out, or whether our poor sister Johnson may not want the half, I leave entirely to their and your discretion. The kindness of that good couple to our shattered family, demands our sincerest gratitude; and though they have almost forgot me, *yet if good things at last arrive, I hope one day to return and increase their good humour, by adding to my own.* . I have sent my cousin Jenny a miniature picture of myself, as I believe it is the most acceptable present I can offer. I have ordered it to be left for her at George Faulkner's, folded in a letter. *The face you well know is ugly enough, but it is finely painted.* I will shortly also send my friends over the Shannon some Mezzotinto prints of myself, and some more of my friends here, such as Burke, Johnson, Reynolds, and Colman. *I believe I have written a hundred letters to different friends in your country, and never received an answer to any of them.* I do not know how to account for this, or why they are unwilling to keep up for me those regards which I must ever retain for them. If then you have a mind to oblige me, you will write often, whether I answer you or not. Let me particularly have the news of

our family and old acquaintances. For instance, you may begin by telling me about the family where you reside, how they spend their time, *and whether they ever make mention of me*. Tell me about my mother; my brother Hodson and his son; my brother Harry's son and daughter; my sister Johnson; the family of Ballyoughter; what is become of them, where they live, and how they do. You talked of being my only brother. I don't understand you. Where is Charles? A sheet of paper occasionally filled with news of this kind, would make me very happy, and would keep you nearer my mind. As it is, my dear brother, believe me to be yours most affectionately, OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

The writer's weakness is here, too, as of old. He believes he *could* get, for his poor, idle, thriftless petitioners, exactly what they want; though ruffles, minus the shirt, are the sum of his own acquisitions. But he will wait; and they must wait; and good things are sure to arrive; and they will one day be all in good humour again. The old, hopeful, sanguine, unreflecting story. Nevertheless, Maurice tired of waiting, as his wealthier relatives tired of helping him to wait; and he is soon afterwards discovered again complaining to his brother, that really he finds it difficult to live like a gentleman. Oliver replies upon this in somewhat plainer fashion; recommending him by all means to quit the unprofitable calling, and betake himself to some handicraft employment, if no better can be found: whereupon Maurice bound himself to a cabinet-maker in Drumsna, in the county of Leitrim; in which calling, several years after his brother's death, he kept a shop in Dublin. Meanwhile Oliver's enquiry after brother-in-law Hodson's son,

soon after his letter reached Athlone, had the effect of bringing back to London a very unsettled, and somewhat eccentric youth: who had formerly visited Goldsmith, after abruptly quitting Dublin University, leaving at that time obscure traces of the extent to which his celebrated relative had befriended him; and who now, having chiefly occupied the interval in foreign travel, during which he had turned to account certain half-finished medical studies, lived for the most part, until his uncle Oliver's death, as a pensioner on his scanty resources. He resembled Oliver in some thoughtless peculiarities of character, and in his odd vicissitudes of good and evil fortune (he once paid a small debt with an undrawn lottery ticket, which turned out a prize of £20,000); practised occasionally, without any regular qualification, as an apothecary, in Newman Street; and ended his days as a prosperous Irish gentleman, farming his patrimonial estate. When Goldsmith died, half the unpaid bill he owed to Mr. William Filby (amounting in all to £79), was for clothes supplied to this nephew Hodson.

One other circumstance indicated by the letter to Kilmore ought not to pass without notice. It has its biographical significance. The head of the author of the *Traveller* now figured in the print-shops. Reynolds had painted his portrait. 'In poetry we may be said to have 'nothing new,' says a letter-writer of the day; 'but we 'have the mezzotinto print of the new poet, Doctor Goldsmith, in the print-shop windows. It is in profile from 'a painting of Reynolds, and resembles him greatly.'

The life of his celebrity is thus, as it were, beginning ; and from no kinder, no worthier hand than that of Reynolds, could it receive inauguration. The great painter's sister (who used herself to paint portraits, with such exact imitation of her brother's defects and avoidance of his beauties that every body *but himself* laughed at them) thought it marvellous that so much dignity could have been given to the poet's face, and yet so strong a likeness be conveyed : for ' Doctor Goldsmith's cast of countenance,' she proceeds to inform us, ' and indeed his whole figure from head to foot, impressed every one at first sight with an idea of his being a low mechanic ; particularly, I believe, a journeyman tailor : ' and in proof the lively lady relates that Goldsmith came in one day, at a party at her brother's, very indignant at an insult he had received from some one in a coffee-house ; and on explaining it, ' the fellow, I believe, took me for a tailor,' all the party present either laughed aloud, or showed they suppressed a laugh. It is a pity they were not more polite, were it only for their host's sake ; since it is certain these jibes were never countenanced by Reynolds. He knew Goldsmith better ; and as he knew, he had painted him. A great artist does not measure a face, tailor-fashion ; it is by seizing and showing the higher aspects of character, that he puts upon his work the stamp of history. No man had seen earlier than Reynolds into Goldsmith's better qualities ; no man so loved and honoured him to the last ; and no man so steadily protected him, with calm, equable, kindly

temper, against Johnson's careless sallies. 'It is amazing,' said the latter, more than once, with that too emphatic habit of 'overcharging' the characteristics of his friends which all agreed in attributing to him, 'it is amazing how little Goldsmith knows; he seldom comes where he is not 'more ignorant than any one else:' and on Reynolds quietly interposing 'yet there is no man whose company 'is more liked,' the other, fully conceding this, would explain it by the gratification people felt, to find a man of 'the most distinguished abilities as a writer' inferior in other respects to themselves. But Reynolds had another explanation. He thought that much of Goldsmith's nonsense, as the nonsense of a man of undoubted wit and understanding, had the essence of conviviality in it. He fancied it not seldom put on for that reason, and for no other. 'One should take care,' says Addison, 'not to grow 'too wise for so great a pleasure of life as laughter;' and some such maxim, Reynolds seems to have thought, was put in practice by Goldsmith. It was not a little, at any rate, to have given that impression to so wise as well as kind an observer; and the confidence between the friends, which was probably thus established, remained unbroken to the end. I can only discover one disagreement that ever came between them; and the famous dinner parties in Leicester Square were now seldom unenlivened by the good humour and gaiety of Goldsmith.

Nor is it improbable that, occasionally, they were a little in need of both. 'Well, Sir Joshua,' said lawyer Dunning,

on arriving first at one of these parties, 'and who have you got to dine with you to day? The last time I dined in your house the company was of such a sort, that by — I believe all the rest of the world enjoyed peace for that afternoon.' But though vehemence and disputation will at times usurp quieter enjoyments, where men of genius and strong character are assembled, the evidence that has survived of these celebrated meetings in no respect impairs their indestructible interest. They were the first great example that had been given in this country, of a cordial intercourse between persons of distinguished pretensions of all kinds; poets, physicians, lawyers, deans, historians, actors, temporal and spiritual peers, house of commons men, men of science, men of letters, painters, philosophers, and lovers of the arts; meeting on a ground of hearty ease, good humour, and pleasantry, which exalts my respect for the memory of Reynolds. It was no prim fine table he set them down to. There was little order or arrangement; there was more abundance than elegance; and a happy freedom thrust conventionalism aside. Often was the dinner board, prepared for seven or eight, required to accommodate itself to fifteen or sixteen; for often, on the very eve of dinner, would Sir Joshua tempt afternoon visitors with intimation that Johnson, or Garrick, or Goldsmith was to dine there. Nor was the want of seats the only difficulty. A want of knives and forks, of plates and glasses, as often succeeded. In something of the same style too, was the attendance; the kitchen had to keep pace with

the visitors; and it was easy to know the guests best acquainted with the house, by their never failing to call instantly for beer, bread, or wine, that they might get them before the first course was over, and the worst confusion began. Once was Sir Joshua prevailed upon to furnish his table with dinner glasses and decanters, and some saving of time they proved; yet as they were demolished in the course of service, he could never be persuaded to replace them. 'But these trifling embarrassments,' added Mr. Courtenay, describing them to Sir James Macintosh, 'only served to enhance the hilarity and singular pleasure of the entertainment.' It was not the wine, dishes, and cookery, not the fish and venison, that were talked of or recommended; those social hours, that irregular convivial talk, had matter of higher relish, and fare more eagerly enjoyed. And amid all the animated bustle of his guests, the host sat perfectly composed; always attentive to what was said, never minding what was eat or drank, and leaving every one at perfect liberty to scramble for himself. Though so severe a deafness had resulted from cold caught on the continent in early life, as to compel the use of a trumpet, Reynolds profited by its use to hear or not to hear, or as he pleased to enjoy the privileges of both, and keep his own equanimity undisturbed. 'He is the same all the year round,' exclaimed Johnson, with honest envy. 'In illness and in pain, he is still the same. Sir, he is the most invulnerable man I know; the man with whom, if you should quarrel, you will find

‘the most difficulty how to abuse.’ Nor was this praise obtained by preference of any, but by cordial respect to all; for in Reynolds there was as little of the sycophant as the tyrant. However high the rank of the guests invited, he waited for none. His dinners were served always precisely at five o’clock. His was not the fashionable ill breeding, says Mr. Courtenay, ‘which could wait an hour for two or three persons of title,’ and put the rest of the company out of humour by the invidious distinction.

Such were the memorable meetings (less frequent at first than they afterward became) from which Goldsmith was now rarely absent. Here appeared the dish of peas one day that were anything but their natural colour, and which one of Beauclerc’s waggish friends recommended should be sent to Hammersmith, because ‘that was the way to turn ’em green.’ It was said in a whisper to Goldsmith; and so tickled and delighted him that he resolved to pass it off for his own at the house of Burke, who had a mighty relish for a bad pun. But when the time came for repeating it, he had unluckily forgotten the point, and fell into hapless confusion. ‘That is the way to *make* ’em green,’ he said: but no one laughed. ‘I mean that is the *road* to turn ’em green,’ he blundered out: but still no one laughed; and, as Beauclerc tells the story, he started up disconcerted, and abruptly quitted the table. A tavern he would often quit, Hawkins tells us, if his jokes were unsuccessful; though at the same time he would generally preface them, as with instinctive distrust



of their effect, 'now I'll tell you a story of myself, which 'some people laugh at and some do not.' The worthy knight adds a story something like Beauclerc's, which he says occurred at the breaking up of one of those tavern evenings, when he entreated the company to sit down, and told them if they would call for another bottle they should hear one of his bon-mots. It turned out to be what he had said on hearing of old Sheridan's habit of practising his stage gestures in a room hung round with ten looking glasses, 'then there were ten ugly fellows together;' whereupon, every body remaining silent, he asked why they did not laugh, 'which they not doing, he 'without tasting the wine left the room in anger.' But all this, even if correctly reported, was less the sensitiveness of ill-nature, than the sudden shame of exaggerated self-distrust. Poor Goldsmith! He could never acquire what it is every one's duty to learn, the making light of petty annoyances. '*Consider, Sir, how insignificant 'this will appear a twelve-month hence,*' was, on such occasions, the precious saying of Johnson, who, if he often inflicted the vexation, was commonly the first to suggest its remedy. But Goldsmith never lost his over sensitive nature. His very suspicions involved him in unreserved disclosures which revealed the unspoiled simplicity of his heart. Alas! that the subtle insight which is so able to teach others, should so often be powerless to guide ourselves! Could Goldsmith only have been as indifferent as he was earnest, as impudent as he was frank, he might have covered

effectually every imperfection in his character. But all was patent. He wore his heart upon his sleeve. He could not conceal what was uppermost in his mind, says Davies ; he blurted it out, says Johnson, to see what became of it. Thus when Hawkins tells us that he heard him say in company, 'yesterday I heard an excellent story and 'would relate it now if I thought any of you able to 'understand it,' the idea conveyed is not an impertinence, but simply that the company, including Hawkins, *was* a very stupid one. 'Good Heavens, Mr. Foote,' exclaimed a lively actress at the Haymarket, 'what a *humdrum* kind 'of man Doctor Goldsmith appears to be in our green-room, compared with the figure he makes in his poetry!' 'The reason of that, madam,' replied the manager, 'is, 'because the Muses are better companions than the Players.' Thinking his companions more stupid than his thoughts, it certainly was not his business to say so ; yet he could not help awkwardly saying it. His mind relieved itself, as a necessity, of all that lay upon it. His kindly purposes and simple desires ; his sympathies to assist others, and his devices to make better appearance for himself ; his innocent distrusts, and amusing vanities ; the sense of his own undeserved disadvantages, and vexation at others' as undeserved success : everything sprang to his lips, and it was only from himself he could conceal anything.

Even Burke could not spare that weakness ; nor refrain from practising upon it, not very justifiably, for the amusement of his friends. He and an Irish acquaintance

(who lived to be Colonel O'Moore, to tell the anecdote to Mr. Croker, and perhaps to colour it a little) were walking to dine one day with Reynolds, when, on arriving in Leicester Square, they saw Goldsmith, also on his way to the same dinner party, standing near a crowd of people who were staring and shouting at some foreign women in the windows of one of the hotels. 'Observe Goldsmith,' said Burke to O'Moore, 'and mark what passes between him and me by-and-bye at Sir Joshua's.' They passed on, and were soon joined at Reynolds's by Goldsmith, whom Burke affected to receive very coolly. 'This seemed to vex poor Goldsmith,' says the teller of the story; and he begged Mr. Burke would tell him how he had had the misfortune to offend him. Burke appeared very reluctant to speak; but after a good deal of pressing said 'that he was really ashamed to keep up an intimacy with one who could be guilty of such monstrous indiscretions as Goldsmith had just exhibited in the Square.' With great earnestness Goldsmith protested himself unconscious of what was meant. 'Why,' said Burke, 'did you not exclaim, as you were looking up at those women, what stupid beasts the crowd must be for staring with such admiration at those *painted Jezebels*, while a man of your talents passed by unnoticed?' 'Surely, surely, my dear friend,' exclaimed Goldsmith, horror-struck, 'I did not say so?' 'Nay,' returned Burke, 'if you had not said so, how should I have known it?' 'That's true,' answered Goldsmith,

with great humility: 'I am very sorry; it was very foolish. *'I do recollect that something of the kind passed through my mind, but I did not think I had uttered it.'* The anecdote is more creditable to Goldsmith than to Burke, to whose disadvantage it was probably afterwards remembered. It should be added that Burke had a turn for ridicule of this kind; and got up a more good-humoured trick against Goldsmith at his own house, not long after this, in which a lively kinswoman was played off as a raw Irish authoress, arrived expressly to see 'the great Goldsmith' and get his subscription to her poems, which with liberal return of praise (for she had read several out aloud) the simple poet gave, abusing them heartily the instant she was gone. Garrick founded a farce upon the incident, which with the title of the *Irish Widow* was played in 1772.

Not always at a disadvantage, however, was Goldsmith in these social meetings. At times he took the lead, and kept it, to even Johnson's annoyance. 'The misfortune 'of Goldsmith in conversation,' he would say on such occasions, 'is this: he goes on without knowing how he 'is to get off. His genius is great, but his knowledge is 'small. As they say of a generous man, it is a pity he is 'not rich, we may say of Goldsmith, it is a pity he is not 'knowing. He would not keep his knowledge to himself.' This is not the way to characterise the talk of an 'idiot.' Indeed sometimes, when the humour suited him, he would put even Burke's talk at the same disadvantage as Goldsmith's. Mentioning the latter as not agreeable, because it

was always for 'fame' ('and the man who talks to unburden 'his mind is the man to delight you'), he would add that Burke, too, was not so agreeable as the variety of his knowledge would otherwise make him, because he talked partly from ostentation; and before the words were forgotten (the next day, if in better humour), would not hesitate to put forth Burke's talk as emphatically the ebullition of his mind, as in no way connected with the desire of distinction, and indulged only because his mind was full. Such remarks and comparisons at the least make it manifest that Goldsmith's conversation was not the folly it is too often assumed to have been; though doubtless it was sometimes too ambitious, and fell short of the effort implied in it. Johnson laid its failure, on other occasions, with greater show of justice, rather to the want of temper than the want of power. 'Goldsmith should not,' he said, 'be for ever attempting to shine in conversation; he has not temper for it, he is so much mortified when he fails. Sir, a game of jokes is composed partly of skill, partly of chance; a man may be beat at times by one who has not the tenth part of his wit. Now Goldsmith putting himself against another, is like a man laying a hundred to one who cannot spare the hundred. It is not worth a man's while. When Goldsmith contends, if he gets the better it is a very little addition to a man of his literary reputation; if he does not get the better, he is miserably vexed.' It should be added that there were other causes than these for Goldsmith's frequent vexation.

Miss Reynolds relates that she overheard a gentleman at her brother's table, to whom he was talking his best, suddenly stop him in the middle of a sentence with 'Hush! Hush! Doctor Johnson is going to say something.' The like was overheard at the first Academy dinner; when a Swiss named Moser, the first keeper appointed, interrupted him on seeing Johnson roll himself as if about to speak, and was paid back for his 'Doctor Shonson' zeal by Goldsmith's quick retort, 'and are you sure you'll *comprehend* what he says?' His happy rebuke of similar subserviency of Boswell's, that he was for turning into a monarchy what ought to be a republic, is recorded by Boswell himself (who adds, with that air of patronage which is now so exquisitely ludicrous, 'for my part I like very well to hear honest Goldsmith 'talk away carelessly'); and upon the whole evidence it seems clear enough, that his talk was not below the average of that of other celebrated men, and certainly did not deserve the Johnsonian antithesis which even good-humoured Langton repeats so complacently: 'no man was 'more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more 'wise when he had.' Walpole said much the same thing of Hume, whose writings he thought so superior to his conversation that he protested the historian understood nothing till he had written upon it; and even of his friend Gray he said he was the worst company in the world, for he never talked easily: yet Walpole himself talked ill, and so did Gay; and so did Dryden, Pope, and Swift; and so did Hogarth and Addison.

Nothing is recorded of those men, or of others as famous, so clever as the specimens of the talk of Goldsmith which Boswell himself has not cared to forget. Nay, even he goes so far as to admit, that 'he was often very fortunate in his 'witty contests, even when he entered the lists with Johnson 'himself.' An immortal instance was remembered by Reynolds. He, Johnson, and Goldsmith were together one day, when the latter said that he thought he could write a good fable; mentioned the simplicity which that kind of composition requires; and observed that in most fables the animals introduced seldom talk in character. 'For 'instance,' said he, 'the fable of the little fishes who saw 'birds fly over their heads, and, envying them, petitioned 'Jupiter to be changed into birds. The skill,' he continued, 'consists in making them talk like little fishes.' At this point he observed Johnson shaking his sides and laughing; whereupon he made this home thrust. 'Why, 'Mr. Johnson, this is not so easy as you seem to think; 'for if *you* were to make little fishes talk, they would talk 'like WHALES.' This was what Garrick would call a forcible hug, and it shook laughter out of Johnson in his own despite. But in truth no one, as Boswell has admitted, could take such 'adventurous liberties' with the great social despot, 'and escape unpunished.' Beauclerc tells us that on Goldsmith originating, one day, a project for a third theatre in London solely for the exhibition of new plays, in order to deliver authors from the supposed tyranny of managers (a project often renewed since, and always sure

to fail, for the simple reason that authors themselves become managers, and all authors cannot be heard), Johnson treated it slightly: upon which the other retorted 'Aye, 'aye, this may be nothing to you, who can now shelter 'yourself behind the corner of a pension;' and Johnson bore it with perfect good humour. But the most amusing instance connected with the pension occurred a year or two afterward, when, on the appearance of Mason's exquisite *Heroic Epistle*, Goldsmith, delighted with it himself, carried it off to his friend, and was allowed to read it out to him from beginning to end with a running accompaniment of laughter, in which Johnson as heartily joined at the invocation to George the Third's selected (and in part pilloried) pensioners, as at the encounter of Charles Fox with the Jews.

. . witness, ye chosen train  
 Who breathe the sweets of his Saturnian reign ;  
 Witness ye Hills, ye *Johnsons*, *Scots*, *Shebbeares*,  
 Hark to my call, for some of you have ears.

When one of the most active of the second-rate politicians, and the great go-between of the attempted alliance between the Chatham and Rockingham whigs, Tommy Townshend (so called not satirically, but to distinguish him from his father), anticipated in the present year that connection of Johnson's and Shebbeare's names (I formerly described them pensioned together, 'the He-Bear and the She-Bear' as some one humorously said), he did not get off so easily. But Johnson had brought these allusions on himself by plunging into party-war, at



the opening of the year, with a pamphlet on the *False Alarm*, as he called the excitement on Wilkes's expulsion, in which he did not spare the opposition; and which, written in two nights at Thrale's, continued to attract attention. Boswell tells us that when Townshend made the attack, Burke, though of Townshend's party, stood warmly forth in defence of his friend; but the recent publication of the *Debates* corrects this curious error. Burke spoke after Townshend, and complained of the infamous private libels of the *Town and Country Magazine* against members of the opposition, but did not refer to Townshend's attack: he left the vindication of Johnson to their common friend Fitzherbert, who rose with an emphatic eulogy at the close of the debate, and called him 'a pattern of morality.' In truth Burke had this year committed himself too fiercely to the stormy side of opposition, to be able to stretch his hand across even to his old friend Johnson. His friend had cast himself with the enemies of freedom, and was left to fare with them. His unsparing vehemence in the House of Commons contrasted with his calm philosophic severity in the press. He was charged with want of common candour, and denounced the sickly habit. 'Virtues are not to be sacrificed to candour.' He was reproached for his following of certain leaders, and made the reproach his glory. 'I will cling to them, adhere to them, follow them in and out, wash the very feet they stand on: wash their feet and be subservient, not from interest but from principle.' Those leaders were

still the Rockinghams, but not so isolated as of old. There were yet dissensions between the rival parties of opposition, but not such as withheld them from concentrating, for this one while at least, hate and bitterness on the government. The Grenvilles had too great a grudge against the Bedfords too freely to indulge at its expense their grudge against the Rockinghams; Chatham had suffered too bitterly for his own mistake, to continue his feud with either; and the Rockinghams themselves, content with Burke's masterly *Observations* defending them against Grenville's finance, had waived their dislike of Wilkes, and backed even faction in the City and Temple in the Lords. The excitement was unexampled. Desertion on either side was denounced as the worst of crimes. Language unheard till now, was launched from both houses at the government. Lord Shelburne dared the premier to find 'a wretch so base and mean-spirited,' as to take the seals Lord Camden had flung down. In evil hour, poor Charles Yorke (Lord Rockingham's attorney-general, and sensitive as he was accomplished) accepted the challenge; and then, maddened by his own reproaches, perished within two days, his patent of peerage lying incomplete before him. Chatham rose in the Lords to a height of daring which even he had never reached, and (resolving to be 'a scarecrow of violence to the gentle warblers of the grove, the moderate whigs and temperate statesmen') prayed that rather than any compromise should now be made, or the people should vail their representative rights to their governors, either the question

might be brought to practical issue, or *Discord prevail for Ever!* Grafton sank beneath the storm, even bodily disabled for his office by the attacks of *Junius*; and his place was filled by Lord North. But *Junius* gathered strength, the stronger his opponent; and his terrors increased as preparation was made to cope with them. His libels conquered the law. Language which Burke told the house he had read with chilled blood, juries sent away unconvicted. In vain were printers hunted down, and small booksellers, and even humble milkmen. In vain did 'the whole French court with their gaudy coaches and jack boots,' go out to hunt the little hare. The Great Boar of the Forest, as Burke called the libeller, still, and always, broke through the toils; and sorry was the sport of following after vermin. North could not visit the palace, without seeing the *Letter to the King* posted up against the wall; the Chief Justice could not enter *his* court, without seeing the *Letter to Lord Mansfield* impudently facing him. There was no safety in sending poor milkmen to prison. There was no protection. The thrust was mortal; but a rapier and a ruffle alone were visible, in the dark alley from which it came.

The more peaceful current of life meanwhile flowed on, and had its graces and enjoyments; not the least of them from Goldsmith's hand. 'This day at 12,' said the *Public Advertiser* of the 26th of May, 'will be published, 'price two shillings, *The Deserted Village*, a Poem. By 'Doctor Goldsmith. Printed for W. Griffin, at Garrick's

‘Head in Catherine Street, Strand.’ Its success was instant and decisive. A second edition was called for on the seventh of June, a third on the fourteenth, a fourth (carefully revised) on the twenty-eighth, and on the sixteenth of August a fifth edition appeared. Even Goldsmith’s enemies in the press were silent, and nothing interrupted the praise which greeted him on all sides. One tribute he did not hear, and was never conscious of; yet from truer heart or finer genius he had none, and none that should have given him greater pride. Gray was passing the summer at Malvern (the last summer of his life), with his friend Nicholls, when the poem came out; and he desired Nicholls to read it aloud to him. He listened to it with fixed attention from the beginning to the end, and then exclaimed ‘*That man is a poet.*’

The judgment has since been affirmed by hundreds of thousands of readers, and any adverse appeal is little likely now to be lodged against it. Within the circle of its claims and pretensions, a more entirely satisfactory and delightful poem than the *Deserted Village* was probably never written. It lingers in the memory where once it has entered: and such is the softening influence (on the heart even more than the understanding) of the mild, tender, yet clear light which makes its images so distinct and lovely, that there are few who have not wished to rate it higher than poetry of yet higher genius. ‘What true and ‘pretty pastoral images,’ exclaimed Burke, years after the poet’s death, ‘has Goldsmith in his *Deserted Village!*

‘They beat all: Pope, and Phillips, and *Spenser too*, in ‘my opinion.’ But opinions that seem exaggerated may in truth be often reconciled to very sober sense; and where any extraordinary popularity has existed, good reason is generally to be shown for it. Of the many clever and indeed wonderful writings that from age to age are poured forth into the world, what is it that puts upon the few the stamp of immortality, and makes them seem indestructible as nature? What is it but their wise rejection of everything superfluous? Being grave histories, or natural stories, of everything that is *not* history or nature? being poems, of everything that is *not* poetry, however much it may resemble it; and especially of that prodigal accumulation of thoughts and images, which, till properly sifted and selected, is as the unhewn to the chiselled marble? What is it, in short, but that unity, completeness, polish, and perfectness in every part, which Goldsmith attained? Thus his pictures may be small; may be far from historical pieces, amazing or confounding us; may be even, if severest criticism will have it so, mere happy *tableaux de genre* hanging up against our walls: but their colours are exquisite and unfading; they have that familiar sweetness of household expression which wins them welcome alike where the rich inhabit, and in huts where poor men lie; and there, improving and gladdening all, they are likely to hang for ever.

Johnson, though he had taken equal interest in the progress of this second poem, contributing to the manuscript the four lines which stand last, yet thought it inferior to the

*Traveller*. But time has not confirmed *that* judgment. Were it only that the field of contemplation in the *Traveller* is somewhat desultory, and that (as a later poet pointed out) its successor has an endearing locality, and introduces us to beings with whom the imagination is ready to contract a friendship, the higher place must be given to the *Deserted Village*. Goethe tells us the transport with which the circle he now lived in hailed it, when they found themselves once more as in another beloved *Wakefield*; and with what zeal he at once set to work to translate it into German. All the characteristics of the first poem seem to me developed in the second; with as chaste simplicity, with as choice selectness of natural expression, in verse of as musical cadence; but with yet greater earnestness of purpose, and a far more human interest. Nor is that purpose to be lightly dismissed because it more concerns the heart than the understanding, and is sentimental rather than philosophical. The accumulation of wealth has *not* brought about man's diminution, nor is trade's proud empire threatened with decay: but too eager are the triumphs of both to be always conscious of evils attendant on even the benefits they bring, and of those it was the poet's purpose to remind us. The lesson can never be thrown away. No material prosperity can be so great, that underneath it, and indeed because of it, will not still be found much suffering and sadness; much to remember that is commonly forgotten, much to attend to that is almost always neglected. Trade would not thrive the less, though shortened somewhat of its

‘unfeeling train ;’ nor wealth enjoy fewer blessings, if its unwieldy pomp less often ‘spurned the cottage from the green.’ ‘It is a melancholy thing to stand alone in one’s country,’ said the late benevolent Lord Leicester, when complimented on the completion of Holkham. ‘I look round, and not a house is to be seen but mine. I am the ‘Giant of Giant Castle, and have eat up all my neighbours.’ There is no man who has risen upward in the world, even by ways the most honourable to himself and kindly to others, that may not be said to have a deserted village, sacred to the tenderest and fondest recollections, which it is well that his fancy should at times revisit.

Goldsmith looked into his heart and wrote. From that great city in which his hard-spent life had been diversified with so much care and toil, he travelled back to the memory of lives more simply passed, of more cheerful labour, of less anxious care, of homely affections and of humble joys for which the world and all its successes offer nothing in exchange.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,  
 In all my griefs . . . and God has given my share . . .  
 I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,  
 Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down ;  
 To husband out life’s taper at the close,  
 And keep the flame from wasting, by repose.  
 I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,  
 Amidst the swains to show my book-learn’d skill ;  
 Around my fire an evening group to draw,  
 And tell of all I felt, and all I saw ;  
 And, as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,  
 Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,  
 I still had hopes, my long vexations past,  
 Here to return . . . and die at home at last.

That hope is idle for him. Sweet Auburn is no more. But though he finds the scene deserted, for us he re-peoples it anew, builds up again its ruined haunts, and revives its pure enjoyments ; from the glare of crowded cities, their exciting struggles and palling pleasures, carries us back to the season of natural pastimes and unsophisticate desires ; adjures us all to remember, in our several smaller worlds, the vast world of humanity that breathes beyond ; shews us that there is nothing too humble for the loftiest and most affecting associations ; and that where human joys and interests have been, their memory is sacred for ever !

Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,  
 Where once the signpost caught the passing eye,  
 Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspir'd,  
 Where gray-beard mirth and smiling toil retir'd,  
 Where village statesmen talk'd with looks profound,  
 And news much older than their ale went round.  
 Imagination fondly stoops to trace  
 The parlour splendours of that festive place ;  
 The whitewash'd wall, the nicely sanded floor,  
 The varnish'd clock that click'd behind the door. . . .  
 Vain transitory splendours ! could not all  
 Reprive the tottering mansion from its fall !  
 Obscure it sinks ; nor shall it more impart  
*An hour's importance to the poor man's heart.*  
 Thither no more the peasant shall repair  
 To sweet oblivion of his daily care ;  
 No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,  
 No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail ;  
 No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,  
 Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear ;  
 The host himself no longer shall be found  
 Careful to see the mantling bliss go round ;  
 Nor the coy maid, half-willing to be prest,  
 Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.



. . Yes ! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,  
These simple blessings of the lowly train ;  
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,  
One native charm, than all the gloss of art.

With darker shadows from the terrible and stony truths that are written in the streets of cities, the picture is afterwards completed ; and here, too, the poet painted from his heart. His own experience, the suffering for which his heart had always bled, the misery his scanty purse was always ready to relieve, are in his contrast of the pleasures of the great, with innocence and health too often murdered to obtain them. Some of his ' distinguished friends ' objected to these views, but he let them stand. They would have ' objected ' to what was not uncommon with himself, abandoning his rest at night to give relief to the destitute. They would have thought the parish should have done what a yet more distinguished friend, Samuel Johnson, once did, and which will probably be remembered when all he wrote or said shall have passed away : his picking up a wretched ruined girl, who lay exhausted on the pavement ; taking her upon his back, carrying her to his house, and placing her in his bed ; not harshly upbraiding her ; taking care of her, with all tenderness, for a long time ; and endeavouring on her restoration to health to put her in a virtuous way of living.

Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,  
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade ;  
Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,  
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.

The dome where pleasure holds her midnight reign,  
 Here, richly deck'd, admits the gorgeous train :  
 Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,  
 The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.  
 Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy !  
 Sure these denote one universal joy!  
 Are these thy serious thoughts ! Ah ! turn thine eyes  
 Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.  
 She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,  
 Has wept at tales of innocence distrest ;  
 Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,  
 Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn ;  
 Now lost to all, her friends, her virtue fled,  
 Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,  
 And pinch'd with cold, and shrinking from the shower,  
 With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour  
 When idly first, ambitious of the town,  
 She left her wheel, and robes of country brown.

Beautifully is it said by Mr. Campbell, that 'fiction in poetry is not the reverse of truth, but her soft and enchanted resemblance ; and this ideal beauty of nature has seldom been united with so much sober fidelity, as in the groups and scenery of the *Deserted Village*.' It is to be added that everything in it is English, the feeling, incidents, descriptions, and allusions ; and that this consideration may save us needless trouble in seeking to identify sweet Auburn with Lissoy. Scenes of the poet's youth had doubtless risen in his memory as he wrote, mingling with, and taking altered hue from, later experiences : it is even possible he may have taken the first hint of his design from a local Westmeath poet and school-master, who, in his youth, had given rhymed utterance to the old tenant grievances of the Irish rural population ;

nor could complaints that were also loudest in those boyish days at Lissoy, of certain reckless and unsparing evictions by which one General Naper had persisted in improving his estate, have passed altogether from Goldsmith's memory. But there was nothing local in his present aim; or if there was, it was the rustic life and rural scenery of England. It is quite natural that Irish enthusiasts should have found out the fence, the furze, the thorn, the decent church, the never-failing brook, the busy mill; it was to be expected that pilgrims should have borne away every vestige of the first hawthorn they could lay their hands on; it was perfectly reasonable, and in the way of business, to rebuild the village inn as Mr. Hogan did, and fix broken tea cups in the wall that pilgrims might not carry *them* away, and to christen his speculation by the name of Auburn. All this, as Walter Scott has said, 'is a pleasing tribute to the poet in the land of his fathers;' but it certainly is no more.

Such tribute as the poem itself was, its author offered to Sir Joshua Reynolds, dedicating it to him. 'Setting 'interest aside,' he wrote, 'to which I never paid much 'attention, I must be indulged at present in following my 'affections. The only dedication I ever made was to my 'brother, because I loved him better than most other men. 'He is since dead. Permit me to inscribe this poem to 'you.' How gratefully this was received, and how strongly it cemented an already fast friendship, needs not be said. The great painter could not rest till he had made public acknowledgment and return. He painted his picture of

*Resignation*, had it engraved by Thomas Watson, and inscribed upon it these words : ‘ This attempt to express a character in the *Deserted Village* is dedicated to Doctor Goldsmith, by his sincere friend and admirer, Joshua Reynolds.’

What Griffin paid for the poem is very doubtful. Cooke tells the story which Walter Scott believed and repeated, that he had stipulated for a hundred pounds, and returned part of it on some one telling him that five shillings a couplet was more than any poetry ever written was worth, and could only ruin the poor bookseller who gave it ; but this is not very credible, though Bishop Percy tells us it would have been ‘ quite in character.’ It is presumable, however, that the sum was small ; and that it was not without reason he told Lord Lisburn, on receiving complimentary inquiries after a new poem at the Academy dinner, ‘ I cannot afford to court the draggle-tail muses, my Lord ; they will let me starve : but by plain prose I can make shift to eat, and drink, and wear good clothes.’ Something to the same effect, indeed, in the poem itself, had mightily stirred the comment and curiosity of the critics. They called them excellent ‘ but alarming lines.’

And thou, sweet Poetry ! thou loveliest maid,  
 Still first to fly where sensual joys invade :  
 Unfit, in these degenerate times of shame,  
 To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame ;  
 Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,  
 My shame in crowds, my solitary pride :  
 Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,  
 That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so ;

Thou guide, by which the nobler arts excel,  
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!

Apollo and the Muses forbid! was the general critical cry. What! shall the writer of such a poem as this, 'the subject of a young and generous king, who loves, cherishes and understands the fine arts, shall *he* be obliged to drudge for booksellers, shall *he* be starved into abandonment of poetry?' Even so. There was no help for it; and it became him to be grateful that there were booksellers to drudge for. 'No author can be poor who understands the arts of booksellers. Without this necessary knowledge, the greatest genius may starve; and with it, the greatest dunce live in splendour. This knowledge I have pretty well dipped into.' Thus, in this very month of May 1770, the most eager young aspirant for literary fame that ever trod the flinty streets of London, was writing home to his country friends. But, alas! his lip was not wetted with the knowledge he fancied he had dipped so deep into. With Goldsmith it was otherwise. He had drank long and weary draughts; had tasted alike the sweetness and the bitterness of the cup; and, no longer sanguine or ambitious, had yet reason to confess himself not wholly discontented. In many cases it is better to want than to have, and in almost all it is better to want than to ask. At the least he *could* make shift, as he said to Lord Lisburn, to eat, and drink, and wear good clothes. The days which had now come to him were not splendid, but neither were they starving days; and they had also brought him such respectful hearing,

that of what his really starving days had been he could now dare to speak out, in the hope of saving others. He lost no opportunity of doing it. Not even to his *Natural History* did he turn, without venting upon this sorrowful theme, in sentences that sounded strangely amid his talk of beasts and birds, what lay so near his heart. 'The lower race of animals, when satisfied, for the instant moment, are perfectly happy; but it is otherwise with man. His mind anticipates distress, and feels the pang of want even before it arrests him. Thus the mind being continually harassed by the situation, it at length influences the constitution, and unfits it for all its functions. Some cruel disorder, *but no way like hunger*, seizes the unhappy sufferer; so that almost all those men who have thus long lived by chance, and whose every day may be considered as an happy escape from famine, *are known at last to die in reality, of a disorder caused by hunger, but which, in the common language, is often called a broken heart. Some of these I have known myself when very little able to relieve them; and I have been told, by a very active and worthy magistrate, that the number of such as die in London for want, is much greater than one would imagine; I think he talked of two thousand in a year.*' If this was written now, as he afterwards told Langton these earlier portions of the *Animated Nature* were, Goldsmith little imagined the immortal name which was now to be added to the melancholy list. The writer of the sanguine letter I have quoted was doomed to be the next victim. He had not

been in London many days, when he so supposed he had mastered the booksellers; and in little less than three months after those hopeful tidings home, he yielded up his brain to the terrible disorder of which Goldsmith had seen so much: so unlike hunger, though hunger-bred. Gallantly had he worked in those three months: projected histories of England, and voluminous histories of London; written for *Magazines, Registers, and Museums* endless, the *London, the Town and Country, the Middlesex Freeholders', the Court and City*; composed a musical burlesque burletta; launched into politics on both sides; contributed sixteen songs for ten and sixpence; received gladly two shillings for an article; lived on a halfpenny roll, or a penny tart, and a glass of water a-day, enjoying now and then a sheep's tongue; invented all the while brave letters about his happiness and success to the only creatures that loved him, his grandmother, mother, and sister at Bristol; even sent them, out of his so many pence a-day, bits of china, fans, and a gown: and then, one fatal morning, after many bitter disappointments (one of them precisely what Goldsmith had himself undergone, in as desperate distress), having gone some three days without food, and refused his poor landlady's invitation to dinner, he was found dead in his miserable room, the floor thickly strewn with scraps of manuscripts he had destroyed, a pocket-book memorandum lying near him to the effect that the booksellers owed him eleven pounds, and the cup which had held arsenic and water still grasped in his hand. It was in a wretched little street

out of Holborn ; the body was taken to the bone-house of St. Andrew's, but no one came to claim it ; and in due time the Shoe Lane pauper-burial-ground received what remained of Chatterton. 'The marvellous boy ! The sleepless soul who perished in his pride !' He was not eighteen. The tragedy had all been acted out before Goldsmith heard of any of its incidents. I am even glad to think that during the whole of the month which preceded the catastrophe, he was absent from England.

He had gone on a visit to Paris in the middle of July. 'The Professor of History,' writes the daughter of the Academy keeper (telling Fuseli, at Rome, how disappointed the literary people connected with the new institution had been, not to receive diplomas of membership like the painters), 'is comforted by the success of his *Deserted Village*, which is a very pretty poem, and has lately put 'himself under the conduct of Mrs. Horneck and her fair 'daughters, and is gone to France : Doctor Johnson sips 'his tea, and cares not for the vanity of the world.' Goldsmith himself, with pleasant humour, has described what happened to the party up to their lodgment at the Calais Hôtel d'Angleterre, in a letter to Sir Joshua Reynolds. They had not arrived many hours when he wrote to his 'dear friend' to say that Mrs. Horneck, the young ladies, and himself, had had a very quick passage from Dover to Calais, which they performed in three hours and twenty minutes ; and that all of them had been extremely sea-sick, 'which 'must necessarily have happened as my machine to prevent





'sea-sickness  
'was not completed.'

They were glad to leave

Dover, he said, because they hated to be imposed upon ; and were in high spirits at coming to Calais, where they had been told that a little money would go a great way. There, upon stepping ashore from the ship, and landing *two little trunks*, which was all they carried with them, they were surprised to see fourteen or fifteen fellows all rushing down to the ship to lay their hands upon them : *'four got under each trunk, the rest surrounded and held*

'*the hasps*;' and in this manner their little baggage was conducted with a kind of funeral solemnity, till it was safely lodged at the custom-house. However, this might be a fault on the side of over-politeness, and they were well enough pleased with the civility till the people came to be paid; 'when every creature that had the happiness of but touching our trunks with their finger expected sixpence, and had so pretty and civil a manner of demanding it, that there was no refusing them.' When they had done with the porters, they had next to speak with the custom-house officers, 'who had their pretty civil way too.' Then they were directed to the Hotel d' Angleterre, where a valet de place came to offer his service, '*and spoke to me ten minutes before I once found out that he was speaking English.*' They had no occasion for his services, however; so they gave him a little money '*because he spoke English, and because he wanted it.*' Goldsmith added that he could not help mentioning another circumstance. He had bought a new ribbon for his wig at Canterbury, and the barber at Calais broke it in order to gain sixpence by buying him a new one.

This was not a very promising beginning; but the party, continuing to carry with them the national enjoyment of scolding everything they met with, passed on through Flanders, and to Paris by way of Lisle. The latter city was the scene of an incident afterwards absurdly misrelated. Standing at the window of their hotel to see a company of soldiers in the square, the beauty of the sisters Horneck

drew such marked admiration, that Goldsmith, with that assumption of solemnity to heighten drollery which was generally a point in his humour, and was often very solemnly misinterpreted, turned off from the window with the remark that elsewhere *he*, too, could have his admirers. The *Jessamy Bride* was asked about the occurrence not many years ago; remembered it as a playful jest; and said how shocked she had subsequently been 'to see it adduced in print as a proof of his envious disposition.' The readers of Boswell will remember that it is so related by him. 'When accompanying two beautiful young ladies on a tour in France, he was seriously angry that more attention was paid to them than to him!'

At Lisle another letter to Reynolds was begun, but laid aside because everything they had seen was so dull that the description would not be worth reading. Nor had matters much improved when they got to Paris. Alas! he had discovered a change in *himself* since he traversed those scenes with only his youth and his poverty for companions. Lying in a barn was no disaster then. Then, there were no postilions to quarrel with, no landladies to be cheated by, no silk coat to tempt him into making himself look like a fool. The world was his oyster in those days, which with his flute he opened. He expressed all this very plainly in a letter to Reynolds soon after their arrival, dated from Paris on the 29th of July. He is anxious to get back to what Gibbon, when he became a member of the Club, called the relish of manly conversation, and the society of the

brown table. He is getting nervous about his arrears of work. He dares not think of another holiday yet, though Reynolds had proposed, on his return, a joint excursion into Devonshire. He is already planning new labour. He is even thinking of another comedy; and therefore glad that Colman's suit in Chancery has ended in confirming his right as acting manager (the whole quarrel was made up the following year by Mr. Harris's quarrel with Mrs. Lesingham). But here is the letter: as printed by Mr. Prior, from the original in possession of Mr. Singer.

"MY DEAR FRIEND, I began a long letter to you from Lisle giving a description of all that we had done and seen, but finding it very dull, and knowing that you would show it again, I threw it aside and it was lost. You see by the top of this letter that we are at Paris, and (as I have often heard you say) we have brought our own amusement with us, for the ladies do not seem to be very fond of what we have yet seen. . With regard to myself I find that travelling at twenty and at forty are very different things. I set out with all my confirmed habits about me and can find nothing on the Continent so good as when I formerly left it. *One of our chief amusements here is scolding at every thing we meet with and praising every thing and every person we left at home. You may judge therefore whether your name is not frequently bandied at table among us.* To tell you the truth I never thought I could regret your absence so much as our various mortifications on the road have often taught me to do. I could tell you of disasters and adventures without number, of our lying in barns, and of my being half poisoned with a dish of green peas, of our quarrelling with postilions and being cheated by our landladies, but I reserve all this for an happy hour which I expect to share with you upon my return. . I have little to

tell you more but that we are at present all well, and expect returning when we have staid out one month, which I should not care if it were over this very day. I long to hear from you all : how you yourself do, how Johnson, Burke, Dyer, Chamier, Colman, and every one of the Club do. I wish I could send you some amusement in this letter, but I protest I am so stupified by the air of this country (*for I am sure it can never be natural*) that I have not a word to say. I have been thinking of the plot of a comedy which shall be entitled *A Journey to Paris*, in which a family shall be introduced with a full intention of going to France to save money. You know there is not a place in the world more promising for that purpose. As for the meat of this country I can scarce eat it, and though we pay two good shillings an head for our dinner, I find it all so tough, that I have spent less time with my knife than my picktooth. *I said this as a good thing at table, but it was not understood. I believe it to be a good thing.* . As for our intended journey to Devonshire I find it out of my power to perform it, for, as soon as I arrive at Dover I intend to let the ladies go on, and I will take a country lodging somewhere near that place in order to do some business. I have so outrun the constable, that I must mortify a little to bring it up again. For God's sake the night you receive this take your pen in your hand and tell me something about yourself, and *myself*, if you know of any thing that has happened. About Miss Reynolds, about Mr. Bickerstaff, my nephew, or any body that you regard. I beg you will send to Griffin the bookseller to know if there be any letters left for me, and be so good as to send them to me at Paris. They may perhaps be left for me at the Porter's Lodge opposite the pump in Temple Lane. The same messenger will do. I expect one from Lord Clare from Ireland. As for others I am not much uneasy about. . Is there any thing I can do for you at Paris ? I wish you would tell me. The whole of my own purchases here, is *one silk coat which I have put on, and which makes me look like a fool. But no*

*more of that.* I find that Colman has gained his lawsuit. I am glad of it. I suppose you often meet. I will soon be among you, better pleased with my situation at home than I ever was before. And yet I must say, that if any thing could make France pleasant, the very good women with whom I am at present would certainly do it. *I could say more about that, but I intend showing them this letter before I send it away.* What signifies teasing you longer with moral observations when the business of my writing is over. I have one thing only more to say, and of that I think every hour in the day, namely, that I am your most sincere and most affectionate friend, OLIVER GOLDSMITH. Direct to me at the Hôtel de Danemarc, Rue Jacob, Fauxbourg St. Germain's."

Little more is to be added of this excursion. It was not made more agreeable to Goldsmith by an unexpected addition to the party in the person of Mr. Hickey (the 'special attorney' who is niched into *Retaliation*), who joined them at Paris, and whose habit of somewhat coarse raillery was apt to be indulged too freely at Goldsmith's expense. One of the stories Hickey told on his return, however, seems to have been true enough. Goldsmith sturdily maintained that a certain distance from one of the fountains at Versailles was within reach of a leap, and tumbled into the water in his attempt to establish that position. It was also told of him, in proof of his oddity, that on Mrs. Horneck desiring him more than once, when they had no place of protestant worship to attend, to read them the morning service, his uniform answer was, 'I should be happy to oblige you, my dear madam, but 'in truth I do not think myself good enough.' This,

however, we may presume to think perhaps less eccentric than his friends supposed it to be.

Goldsmith did not stay in Dover as he had proposed. He brought the ladies to London. Among the letters forwarded to him in Paris had been an announcement of his mother's death. Dead to any consciousness or enjoyment of life she had for some time been; blind, and otherwise infirm: hardly could the event have been unexpected by him, or by any one. Yet are there few, however early tumbled out upon the world, to whom the world has given any substitute for that earliest friend. Not less true than affecting is the saying in one of Gray's charming letters: 'I have discovered a thing very little known, which is, that 'in one's whole life one never can have any more than a 'single mother.' The story (which Northcote says Miss Reynolds told him) that would attribute to Goldsmith the silly slight of appearing in half-mourning at this time, and explaining it as for a 'distant' relation, would not be credible of any man of common sensibility; far less of him. Mr. William Filby's bills enable us to speak with greater accuracy. As in the instance of his brother's death, they contain an entry of a 'suit of mourning,' sent home on the 8th of September.

But indulgence of sorrow is the luxury of the idle. Eight days later Goldsmith was signing a fresh agreement with Davies for an *Abridgment* of his Roman History in a duodecimo volume; for making which, 'and for putting his name thereto,' Davies undertook to pay fifty guineas.

The same worthy bibliopole had published in the summer his *Life of Parnell*, to which I formerly referred. It was lightly and pleasantly written; and contained that pretty illustration (whereof all who have written biography know the truth as well as beauty), of the difficulty of obtaining, when fame has set its seal on any celebrated man, those personal details of his obscurer days which his contemporaries have not cared to give: 'the dews of the morning are past, and we vainly try to continue the chase by the meridian splendour.' It also contained remarks on the ornamented schools of poetry, in which allusions (not in the best taste) were levelled against Collins and Gray; yet remarks of which the principle was sound enough, though pushed, as good principles are apt to be, to an absurd extreme. For of styles all bristling with epithets, Voltaire himself was not less tolerant than Goldsmith; nor ever with greater zest denounced the adjective, as the substantive's greatest enemy. But merits as well as faults in the Parnell memoir Tom Davies of course tested by the sale; and with result so satisfactory that another memoir had at once been engaged for, and now occupied Goldsmith on his return. Bolingbroke was the subject selected, for its hot party-interest of course: but it was not the writer's mode, whatever the bookseller may have wished, to turn a literary memoir into a political pamphlet; and what was written proved very harmless that way, with as little to concern Lord North as Mr. Wilkes, and of as small interest, it would seem, to the writer as to either. 'Doctor Goldsmith is



‘gone with Lord Clare into the country,’ writes Davies to Granger, ‘and I am plagued to get the proofs from him of ‘his *Life of Lord Bolingbroke*.’ However, he did get them; and the book was published in December.

Goldsmith continued with Lord Clare during the opening months of 1771. They were together at Gosfield, and at Bath; and it was in the latter city the amusing incident occurred which Bishop Percy has related, as told him by the Duchess of Northumberland. The Duke and Duchess occupied a house next door to Lord Clare’s, and were surprised one day, when about to sit down to breakfast, to see Goldsmith enter the breakfast-room as from the street, and, without notice of them or the conversation they continued, fling himself unconcernedly on a sofa. After a few minutes, breakfast being meanwhile served, the Duke asked him to take a seat at the table; but, the invitation calling him back from the dream-land he had been visiting, he declared with profuse apologies that he had thought he was in his friend Lord Clare’s house, and in irrecoverable confusion hastily withdrew. ‘But not,’ adds the Bishop, ‘till they had good-naturedly exacted a promise that he ‘would give them his company to dinner.’ Of Lord Clare’s friendly familiarity with the poet, the incident gives us proof; he had himself no very polished manners (he is the *Squire Gawkey* of the libels of the day), and might the better tolerate Goldsmith’s; but that their intercourse at present was as frequent as familiar, seems to have been because Lord Clare had most need of a friend. ‘I am

'told,' says a letter-writer of the day, 'that Doctor Goldsmith now generally lives with his countryman Lord Clare, *who has lost his only son, Colonel Nugent.*' He was not without occasional mortifications, however, such as his host could not protect him from; and one of them was related by himself. In his 'diverting simplicity,' says Boswell, speaking with his own much more diverting air of patronage, Goldsmith complained one day, in a mixed company, of Lord Camden. 'I met him,' he said, 'at Lord Clare's house in the country; and he took no more notice of me than if I had been an ordinary man.' At this, according to Boswell, himself and the company laughed heartily; whereupon Johnson stood forth in defence of his friend. 'Nay, gentlemen, Doctor Goldsmith is in the right. A nobleman ought to have made up to such a man as Goldsmith; and I think it is much against Lord Camden that he neglected him.'

It was doubtless much for Lord Clare that he did not. By that simple means, he would seem to have lessened many griefs, and added to many an enjoyment. Attentions are cheaply rendered that win such sympathy as a true heart returns; and if, from the spacious avenues of Gosfield park, Lord Clare had sent an entire buck every season to his friend's humble chambers in the Temple, the single *Haunch of Venison* which Goldsmith sent him back would richly have repaid him. The charming verses which bear that name were written this year, and seem to have been written for Lord Clare alone; nor was it till two

years after their writer's death that they obtained a wider audience than his circle of friends. Yet, written with no higher aim than of private pleasantry, a more delightful piece of humour, or a more finished piece of style, has probably been seldom written. There is not a word to spare, every word is in its right place, the most boisterous animal spirits are controlled by the most charming good taste, and an indescribable airy elegance pervades and encircles all. Its very incidents seem of right to claim a place here, so naturally do they fall within the drama of Goldsmith's life.

Allusions in the lines fix their date to the early months of 1771 ; and it was probably on his return from the visit to which reference has just been made, that Lord Clare's side of venison had reached him.

Thanks, my lord, for your venison, for finer or fatter  
 Ne'er rang'd in a forest, or smok'd in a platter :  
 The haunch was a picture for painters to study,  
 The white was so white and the red was so ruddy.  
 Though my stomach was sharp, I could scarce help regretting  
 To spoil such a delicate picture by eating :  
 I had thoughts in my chamber to place it in view,  
 To be shown to my friends as a piece of virtù ;  
*As in some Irish houses, where things are so-so,*  
*One gammon of bacon hangs up for a show ;*  
*But, for eating a rasher of what they take pride in,*  
*They'd as soon think of eating the pan it is fried in.*

But these witty fancies yield to more practical views as he contemplates the delicate luxury ; and he bethinks him of the appetites most likely to do it justice.

To go on with my tale . . . as I gazed on the haunch,  
 I thought of a friend that was trusty and staunch ;

So I cut it, and sent it to Reynolds undrest,  
 To paint it, or eat it, just as he lik'd best.  
 Of the neck and the breast I had next to dispose . .  
 'Twas a neck and a breast that might rival Monroe's . .  
 But in parting with these I was puzzled again,  
 With the how, and the who, and the where, and the when :  
 There's H—d, and C—y, and H—rth, and H—ff,  
 I think they love venison. . *I know they love beef!*

Ah ! he had excellent reason to know it. These were four of his poor poet-pensioners, three of whom, in the first uncorrected copy of the poem, stood undisguisedly as ' *Coley*, and *Williams*, and *Howard*, and *Hiff*;' but *Hiffernan* is alone recognisable now. (Monroe was Lord Townshend's *Dorothy*, to whose charms he devoted his verse.)

But hang it . . to poets who seldom can eat,  
 Your very good mutton 's a very good treat;  
 Such dainties to them ! it would look like a flirt,  
 Like sending 'em ruffles when wanting a shirt.  
 While thus I debated, in reverie centred,  
 An acquaintance, a friend as he call'd himself, enter'd ;  
 An underbred, fine-spoken fellow was he,  
 And he smil'd as he look'd at the venison and me.

This is the hero of the poem ; and sketched so vividly, with a humour so life-like and droll, that he was probably a veritable person. In the first published copy, indeed, which contains touches I prefer to the corrected version, he is described as ' a fine spoken Custom-house officer he.' In what follows, the leading notion is founded on one of *Boileau's* satires, but the comedy is both more rich and more delicate. The visitor ascertains that the venison is really *Goldsmith's*.

'If that be the case then,' cried he, very gay,  
 'I'm glad I have taken this house in my way.  
 To-morrow you take a poor dinner with me ;  
 No words . . I insist on't . . precisely at three.  
*We'll have Johnson and Burke ; all the wits will be there ;  
 My acquaintance is slight, or I'd ask my Lord Clare.*  
 And, now that I think on't, as I am a sinner !  
 We wanted this venison to make out the dinner.  
 What say you . . a *pasty* ! it shall, and it must ;  
*And my wife, little Kitty, is famous for crust.*  
 Here, porter ! . . this venison with me to Mile-end ;  
 No stirring, I beg . . *my dear friend . . my dear friend !*'  
 Thus, snatching his hat, he brush'd off like the wind,  
 And the porter and catables follow'd behind.  
 Left alone to reflect, having emptied my shelf,  
 And 'nobody with me at sea but myself,'  
 Though I could not help thinking my gentleman hasty,  
*Yet Johnson, and Burke, and a good venison pasty,  
 Were things that I never dislik'd in my life. .*  
 Though clogg'd with a coxcomb, and Kitty his wife.  
 So next day, in due splendour to make my approach,  
*I drove to his door in my own hackney-coach.*

Sad is the disappointment. He had better have remained (as the Duke of Cumberland had said in those love-letters to Lady Grosvenor with which the newspapers were now making mirth for the town) with 'nobody with him at sea but himself.' Johnson and Burke can't come. The one is at Thrale's, and the other at that horrible House of Commons. But never mind, says the host ; you shall see somebody quite as good. And here Goldsmith remembered his former visitor, Parson Scott, who had just now got his fat Northumberland livings in return for his *Anti Sejanus*, and was redoubling anti-whig efforts (in hope of a bishopric very probably), as *Panurge* and *Cinna*.

‘There is a villain who writes under the signature of *Panurge*,’ exclaimed the impetuous Barré, from his seat on the 12th of March, ‘a noted ministerial scribbler undoubtedly supported by government, who has this day charged the Duke of Portland with robbing Sir James Lowther, yet this dirty scoundrel is suffered to go unpunished.’ Not wholly; for Goldsmith, to whom Burke had probably talked of the matter at the Club, now ran his polished rapier through this political parson. Never mind for Burke and Johnson, repeats his host; I’ve provided capital substitutes.

‘For I knew it,’ he cried, ‘both eternally fail,  
The one with his speeches, and t’other with Thrale:  
But no matter, I’ll warrant we’ll make up the party  
*With two full as clever, and ten times as hearty.*  
*The one is a Scotchman, the other a Jew,*  
They’re both of them merry, and authors like you.  
The one writes the *Snarler*, the other the *Scourge*;  
Some think he writes *Cinna* . . . he owns to *Panurge*.’

The only hope left is the pasty; though it looks somewhat alarming when dinner is served, and no pasty appears. There is fried liver and bacon at the top, tripe at the bottom; spinach at the sides, with ‘pudding made hot;’ and in the middle a place where the pasty ‘was . . . not.’ Now Goldsmith can’t eat bacon or tripe; and even more odious to him than either is the ravenous literary Scot, and the talk of the chocolate-cheeked scribe of a Jew (who ‘likes these here dinners *so pretty and small*’): but still there’s the pasty promised, with Kitty’s famous crust; and of this a rumour goes gradually round the

table, till the Scot, though already replete with tripe and bacon, announces 'a corner for thot;' and 'we'll all keep a corner,' is the general resolve, and on the pasty everything is concentrated: when the terrified maid brings in, not the pasty, but the catastrophe, in the shape of terrible news from the baker. To him had the pasty been carried, crust and all:

And so it fell out, that that negligent sloven  
*Had shut out the pasty on shutting his oven.*

It may have been on hearing these verses read in the Beauclerc and Bunbury circles (it was from a copy Lord Clare had given Bunbury they were afterwards printed) that Horace Walpole conceded to the 'silly changeling,' as he called Goldsmith, 'bright gleams of parts;' this being the style of verse he relished most, and could value beyond *Travellers* and *Deserted Villages*. It was in a later letter he made it a kind of boast that he had never exchanged a syllable with Johnson in his life, and had never been in a room with him six times; for the necessity of finding himself, once a year at least, perforce in the same room with him, and with Goldsmith too, did not till the present year begin. On St. George's day, 1771, Sir Joshua Reynolds took the chair at the first annual dinner of the Royal Academy: where the entertainers, himself and his fellow Academicians, sat surrounded by such evidence of claims to respect as their own pencils had adorned the walls with, and their guests were the most distinguished men of the day. It was one of the happy



devices of the president by which he steered the new and unchartered Academy through those quicksands and shoals that had wrecked the chartered institution out of which it rose. Academies cannot create genius; academies had nothing to do with the begetting of Hogarth, or Reynolds, or Wilson, or Gainsborough, the greatest names of our English



school; but they may strengthen the painter's claims to consideration and esteem, and give, to that sense of dignity which should invest every liberal art, and which too often passes for an airy nothing amid the hustle and crowd of more vulgar pretences, 'a local habitation and a name.' This was the main wise drift of Reynolds and his fellow labourers; it was the charter that held them together in spite of all their later dissensions; and to this day it outweighs the gravest fault or disadvantage that has yet been charged against the Royal Academy.

A fragment of the conversation at this first Academy dinner has survived; and takes us from it to the darkest contrast, the most deplorable picture of human misery and disadvantage, which even these pages have described. Goldsmith spoke of an extraordinary boy who had come up to London from Bristol, died very miserably, and left a wonderful treasure of ancient poetry behind him. Horace Walpole listened carelessly at first, it would seem; but soon perceived in the subject of conversation a special interest for himself. Some years afterwards he described what passed, with an affectation of equanimity which even then he did not feel. 'Dining at the Royal Academy,' he said, 'Doctor Goldsmith drew the attention of the company with the account of a marvellous treasure of ancient poems lately discovered at Bristol, and expressed enthusiastic belief in them; for which he was laughed at by Doctor Johnson, who was present. I soon found that this was the *trouvaille* of my friend Chatterton; and I told Doctor Goldsmith

‘ that this novelty was known to me, who might, if I had  
‘ pleased, have had the honour of ushering the great dis-  
‘ covery to the learned world. You may imagine, sir, we did  
‘ not at all agree in the measure of our faith. But though  
‘ his credulity diverted me, my mirth was soon dashed ; for  
‘ on asking about Chatterton, he told me he had been  
‘ in London, and had destroyed himself. The persons  
‘ of honour and veracity who were present will attest with  
‘ what surprise and concern I thus first heard of his  
‘ death.’ Yes ; for the concern was natural. Even a Gold-  
smith credulity, for once, would have been Walpole’s better  
friend. His mirth was dashed at the time, and his peace  
was for many years invaded, by that image of Chatterton.  
‘ From the time he resisted the imposition,’ says Miss  
Hawkins in her considerate way, ‘ he began to go down in  
‘ public favour.’ An imposition it undoubtedly was, even  
such an imposition as he had himself attempted with his  
*Castle of Otranto* ; and he had a perfect right to resist it.  
It was no guilt he had committed, but it was a great occa-  
sion lost. The poor boy who invented *Rowley* (the most  
wonderful invention of literature, all things considered),  
had not only communicated his discovery to the ‘ learned  
Mr. Walpole,’ but the learned Mr. Walpole had with pro-  
fuse respect and deference believed in it, till Gray and  
Mason laughed at him ; when, turning coldly away from  
Chatterton’s eager proposals, he planted in that young  
ambitious heart its bitterest thorn. As for Goldsmith’s  
upholding of the authenticity of *Rowley*, it may pass with

a smile, if it really meant anything more than a belief in poor Chatterton himself; and it is a pity that Doctor Percy should have got up a quarrel with him about it, as he is said to have done. There is nothing so incredible that the wisest may not be found to believe. Hume believed in *Ossian* once, though a few years later he doubted, and at his death scornfully *disbelieved*.

Goldsmith's stay in London, at this time, was to see his *English History* through the press; and it did not long detain him. But his re-appearance in the Temple seldom failed to bring him new acquaintances now. His reputation kept no one at a distance; for his hospitable habits, his genial unaffected ways, were notorious to all. In particular to his countrymen. The Temple student from Ireland, with or without introduction, seems to have walked into his chambers as a home. To this period belong two such new acquaintances, sufficiently famous to have survived for recollection. The one was a youth named Day, afterwards one of the Irish judges, and more famous for his amiability than his law; the other was a friend and fellow-student of his, now ripening for a great career, and the achievement of an illustrious name. Henry Grattan's accomplishments made their first strong impression on Goldsmith; and it need not be reckoned their least distinction. Judge Day lived to talk and write to Mr. Prior about these early times; and described the 'great delight' which 'the conversation and society of Grattan,' then a youth of about nineteen, seemed to give to their more

distinguished countryman. Again and again he would come to Grattan's room in Essex Court; till 'his warm heart,' Mr. Day modestly adds, 'became naturally prepossessed 'towards the associate of one whom he so much admired.'

Goldsmith's personal appearance and manners had made a lively impression on the young Templar. He recalled them vividly after a lapse of near seventy years, and his description is one of the best we have. He was short, he says; about five feet five or six inches; strong but not heavy in make, and rather fair in complexion; his hair, such at least as could be distinguished from his wig, was brown. 'His features were plain, but not repulsive; certainly not 'so when lighted up by conversation.' Though his complexion was pale, his face round and pitted with the small pox, and a somewhat remarkable projection of his forehead and his upper lip were excellent sport for the caricaturists, the expression of intelligence, benevolence, and good humour, predominated over every disadvantage, and made the face extremely pleasing. This is not more evident in Reynolds's paintings than in Bunbury's whimsical drawings. His manners were simple, natural, and 'perhaps, on the whole, we may say not polished:' at least, Mr. Day explains, without that refinement and good breeding which the exquisite polish of his compositions would lead us to expect. He was always cheerful and animated, '*often indeed boisterous in his mirth;*' entered with spirit into convivial society; contributed largely to its enjoyments by solidity of information, and the naïveté and originality of his

character ; talked often without premeditation, and laughed loudly without restraint. It was a laugh ambitious to compete with even Johnson's : which Davies, with an enviable knowledge of natural history, compared to the laugh of a rhinoceros ; and which seemed to Boswell, in their midnight walkings, to resound from Temple-bar to Fleet-ditch. To such explosions of mirth from Goldsmith, it would seem, the Grecian Coffee House now oftenest echoed ; for it had become the favourite resort of the Irish and Lancashire Templars, whom he delighted in collecting around him, in entertaining with a cordial and unostentatious hospitality, and in occasionally amusing with his flute or with whist, 'neither of which he played very well.' Of his occupations and dress at the time, Judge Day confirms and further illustrates what is already known to us. He was composing light and superficial works, he says, memoirs and histories ; not for fame, but for the more urgent need of recruiting exhausted finances. To such labours he returned, and shut himself up to provide fresh matter for his bookseller, and fresh supplies for himself, whenever his funds were dissipated ; 'and they fled more rapidly from his being 'the dupe of many artful persons, male and female, who 'practised upon his benevolence.' With a purse replenished by labour of this kind, adds the worthy judge, the season of relaxation and pleasure took its turn, in attending the theatres, Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and other scenes of gaiety and amusement ; which he continued to frequent as long as his supply held out, and where he was fond of exhibiting

his muscular little person in the gayest apparel of the day, to which was added a bag-wig and sword. This favourite costume, it appears, involved him one day in a short but comical dialogue with two coxcombs in the Strand, one of whom, pointing to Goldsmith, called to his companion to 'look at that fly with a long pin stuck through it:' whereupon, says Mr. Day, the sturdy little poet instantly called aloud to the passers-by to caution them against 'that brace of disguised pickpockets;' and, to show that he wore a sword as well for defence from insolence as for ornament, retired from the footpath into the coach-way to give himself more space, 'and half 'drawing, beckoned to the witty gentleman armed in 'like manner, to follow him: but he and his companion 'thinking prudence the better part of valour, declined the 'invitation, and sneaked away amid the hootings of the 'spectators.' The prudent example was followed not long afterwards by his old friend Kenrick, who, having grossly libelled him in some coarse lines on seeing his name 'in the list of mummers at the late masquerade,' and being, by Goldsmith himself at an accidental meeting in the Chapter Coffee-house, not only charged with the offence but with personal responsibility for it, made a shuffling and lame retreat from his previously avowed satire, and publicly declared his disbelief of the foul imputations contained in it. But an acquaintance of both entered the house soon after Goldsmith had quitted it, and relates that he found Kenrick publicly haranguing the coffee-room against the man to

whom he had just apologised, and showing off both his ignorance of science (a great subject with the 'rule-maker') and his enormous conceit, by an account of how he had on some occasion maintained that the sun was not eight days or so more in the northern than the southern signs, and, being referred to Maupertuis for a better opinion, had answered 'Maupertuis! I know more of the matter than Maupertuis.'

The masquerade itself was a weakness to be confessed. It was among the temptations of the winter or town Ranelagh which was this year built in the Oxford Road, at an expense of several thousand pounds, and with such dazzling magnificence (it is now the poor faded Pantheon) that 'Balbec in all its glory' was the comparison it suggested to Horace Walpole. Here and at Vauxhall there is little doubt that Goldsmith was often to be seen, and even here his friend Reynolds good-naturedly kept him company. 'Sir Joshua and Doctor Goldsmith at Vauxhall,' is a fact that now frequently meets us in the Garrick correspondence. 'Sir Joshua and Goldsmith,' writes Beauclerc to Lord Charlemont, 'have got into a round of pleasures.' 'Would you imagine,' he adds in another letter, 'that Sir Joshua is extremely anxious to be a member of Almacks?' 'You see what noble ambition will make a man attempt.' Whether the same noble ambition animated Goldsmith, whether the friends ever appeared in red-heeled shoes to imitate the leading maccaronis, whether in rivalry of Charles Fox and Lord Carlisle they masqueraded at any time as

exquisitely dressed 'running footmen,' is not recorded; but such were the fashionable follies of the day, indulged now and then by the gravest people. 'Johnson often went to 'Ranelagh,' says Mr. Maxwell, 'which he deemed a place 'of innocent recreation.' 'I am a great friend to these 'public amusements, sir,' said he to Boswell; 'they keep 'people from vice.' Poor Goldsmith had often to repent such pleasures, notwithstanding. Sir Joshua found him one morning, on entering his chambers unannounced, walking quickly about from room to room, making a football of a bundle which he deliberately kicked before him; and on enquiry found it was a masquerade dress, bought when he could ill afford it, and for which he was thus doing penance. He was too poor to have anything in his possession that was not useful to him, he said to Reynolds; and was therefore taking out the value of his extravagance in exercise.

Other allusions to a habit which did not admit of even so much practical repentance, are incidentally made in the letters of the time. Judge Day has mentioned that he was fond of whist, and adds that he played it particularly ill; but in losing his money he never lost his temper. In a run of bad luck and worse play, he would fling his cards upon the floor, and exclaim '*Byefore* George! I ought for 'ever to renounce thee, fickle, faithless Fortune!' I have traced the origin of this card-playing to the idle days of Ballymahon; and that the love of it continued to beset him, there is no ground for questioning. But it may well



be doubted if anything like a grave imputation of gambling could with fairness be raised upon it. Mr. Cradock, who made his acquaintance at the close of this year, tells us that 'his greatest real fault was, that if he had thirty pounds in his pocket, he would go into certain companies in the country, and in hopes of doubling the sum, would generally return to town without any part of it:' and another acquaintance tells us that the 'certain companies' were supposed to be Beauclerc and men of that stamp. But this only provokes a smile. The class to which Beauclerc belonged, were the men like Charles Fox or Lord Stavordale, Lord March or Lord Carlisle, whose nightly gains and losses at White's or Almacks were now the town talk; and though Goldsmith could as little afford thirty pounds lost in as many nights at loo, as Lord Stavordale fifteen thousand lost by one hand at hazard, the reproach of putting it in risk with as much recklessness does not seem really chargeable to him. When Garrick accused him of it, he was smarting under an attack upon himself, and avowedly retaliating. The extent of the folly is great enough, when merely described as the indulgence among private friends, at an utterly thoughtless cost, of a real love of card-playing. Such it seems to have been: and as such will shortly meet us at the Bunburys', the Chambers's, and other houses he visited; where, poorer than any one he was in the habit of meeting, he invariably played worse than any one, generally lost, and always more than he could afford to lose. Let no reproach really merited be

withheld, in yet connecting the habit with a worthier inducement than the love of mad excitement or miserable gain. 'I am sorry,' said Johnson, 'I have not learned 'to play at cards. It is very useful in life. It generates 'kindness, and consolidates society.' If that innocent design was ever the inducement of any man, it may fairly be assumed for Goldsmith.

His part in his *English History* completed, there was nothing to prevent his betaking himself to the country ; but it was not for amusement he now went there. He was resolved again to write for the theatre. His necessities were the first motive; but the determination to try another fall with sentimental comedy, no doubt very strongly influenced him. Poor Kelly's splendid career had come to somewhat ignominious close. No sooner had his sudden success given promise of a rising man, than the hacks of the ministry laid hold of him, using him as the newspaper hack they had attempted to make of Goldsmith ; and when Garrick announced his next comedy, *A Word to the Wise*, a word to a much wider audience went rapidly round the town, and sealed poor Kelly's fate. His play was hardly listened to. His melancholy satisfaction was that he had fallen before Wilkes and Liberty, not before laughter and wit ; but the sentence was a decisive one. Passed at Drury Lane in 1770, he had, with a new play, attempted its reversal at Covent Garden in the present year ; but to little better purpose, though his name had been carefully concealed, and ' a young American clergyman not yet arrived

in England' put forth as the author. On the fall of Hugh Kelly, however, had risen a more formidable antagonist in the person of Richard Cumberland. He came into the field with every social advantage. He was the son and great grandson of a bishop; his mother was the celebrated Bentley's daughter; he had himself held a fellowship of Trinity; and, connected as private secretary with Lord Halifax, he had passed through the subordinate political offices, when weariness of waiting for promotion turned his thoughts to the stage. His first comedy, ushered in by a prologue in which he attacked all contemporary dramatists, and complimented Garrick as 'the immortal actor,' was played at Covent Garden; and Garrick being present, and charmed with the unexpected compliment (for in earlier days he had rejected a tragedy by Cumberland), Fitzherbert, in whose box he was, made the author and actor known to each other, a sudden friendship was struck up, and Cumberland's second comedy secured for Drury Lane. This was the *West Indian*; produced with decisive success in the present year, and an unquestionably strong reinforcement of the sentimental school. Cumberland thought himself, indeed, the *creator* of his own school, and ignored the existence of poor Kelly; but that was one of many weaknesses he afterwards more fully developed, and which Sheridan amusingly satirized in *Sir Fretful Plagiary*. He indulged ridiculous airs of patronage to men who stood confessedly above him; professed a lofty indifference to criticism that tortured him; abused those dramatists most heartily

whose notions he was readiest to borrow ; and had a stock of conceit and self-complacency which was proof against every effort to diminish it. Goldsmith discovered all this long before Sheridan ; subtly insinuated it in those famous lines,

(A flattering painter, who made it his care,  
 To draw men as they ought to be, not as they are.  
 His gallants are all faultless, his women divine,  
 And Comedy wonders at being so fine !  
 Like a tragedy queen he has dizen'd her out,  
 Or rather like Tragedy giving a rout.  
 His fools have their follies so lost in a crowd  
 Of virtues and feelings, that Folly grows proud ;  
 And coxcombs, alike in their failings alone,  
 Adopting his portraits, are pleas'd with their own.)

which were written in a spirit of exquisite persiflage at once detected by the lively Mrs. Thrale ; and lived to have amusing corroboration of its truth in Cumberland's grave gratitude for these very verses. He had not discovered their real meaning, even when he wrote his *Memoirs* five-and-thirty years later. He remained still grateful to Goldsmith for having laughed at him.

Nevertheless, Goldsmith was now conscious of an opponent in the author of the *West Indian* who challenged his utmost exertion ; and, eager again to make it in behalf of the merriment, humour, and character of the good old school of comedy (Colman so far encouraged his purpose, as to reproduce the *Good Natured Man* during the run of the *West Indian*), withdrew to the quiet of a country lodging to pursue his labour undisturbed. The *Shoemaker's Paradise* was no longer his ; but he continued his liking for the

neighbourhood, and took a single room in a farmer's house near the six mile stone on the Edgeware Road. It so suited his modest wants and means, and he liked the farmer's family so much, that he returned to it the following summer to write his *Natural History*, 'carrying down his books in two returned post chaises'; and it was then that Boswell's curiosity was moved to go and see the place, taking with him Mr. Mickle, translator of the *Lusiad* and author of the ballad of *Cumnor Hall*. 'Goldsmith was not at home; but having a curiosity to see his apartment we went in, and found curious scraps of descriptions of animals, scrawled upon the wall with a black-lead pencil.' Leaving him and his labours here, events which preceded the publication of his *English History* bring us back for a while to London.

Burke had just resumed those farmer occupations at Beaconsfield into which he threw himself with as much energy as if they had been party politics, after a session of unprecedented violence, but which had not ended in vehement speeches alone. Impelled and supported by the excitement out of doors, which had risen to unexampled height, and high above whose loudest storm the triumphant thunder of *Junius* was heard rattling against the treasury benches, he, and the minority with whom he acted, had been able at last to crush Lord North's majorities. The battle of the session was fought upon the right of the press to publish reports of what was passing in Parliament; and if *Junius* and Wilkes had done nothing more than help us to

a few years' earlier enjoyment of that popular right, such brawling ills as undoubtedly attended them might claim to have received expiation. It was in vain that Lord North walked out into the lobby with his splendid majorities; the opposition went back two hundred years for a precedent, and, strong in public opinion, invoked the orders of the house against its own tyranny. On the question of bringing what Colonel Onslow, with a proper sense of sport, called 'three brace' of printers to the bar, Burke and Barré divided three and twenty times; and when they left the house at the close of the struggle, between five and six o'clock in the morning of Saturday the 12th of March, they knew that the privilege was won. 'Posterity,' exclaimed Burke, 'will bless the pertinaciousness of this day.' In which faith he was quite content to receive the abuse of his contemporaries. It was not sparing. Conway recommended him to carry that line of tactics in future to *Hockley in the Hole*. Charles Fox grieved that he should turn the house into a bear-garden. George Onslow asked what else but ignorance of its orders could the house expect from a man who was not descended from parliamentary men. Burke owned the insolent impeachment. 'I am *not* descended from members of 'parliament,' he said. 'I am not descended from any distinguished character whatever. My father left me nothing 'in the world but good principles, good instruction, good 'example, which I have not departed from.' Nor was it in the house alone that such attacks were made. A churchman who had been his early associate, and was god-father

to his son, had lately received a mitre from Lord Mansfield, and abuse of his seventeen years' friend might seem to have been the condition of the gift. He called Burke a bear-garden railer and declaimer; charged his companions with the malignity of treason, and himself with things dangerous and desperate; told him the world cried out against such arrogance in a man of his condition, and warned him against turning his house into a *hole of adders*. The ministry seconded these zealous supporters, and went about to fasten *Junius* upon him. Their papers had been rife with that suspicion, ever since the letters began. Even the Whigs became alarmed, and sent the brother of Tommy Townshend to obtain his formal disclaimer. Burke gave it, though not without reluctant and galled submission to the right implied in demanding it; and was thenceforth, beyond all question, to be for ever held acquitted of the charge. 'Sir,' said Johnson, 'I should have believed Burke to be *Junius*, because I know no man but Burke who is capable of writing these letters; but Burke spontaneously denied 'it to me.' Better, however, than even such spontaneous denial, and satisfactory where Townshend's disclaimer had failed to satisfy, should have been the evidence afforded by the letters themselves. This was the year when Garrick, smiling and happy amid the great who fondled and flattered him; sending meddling messages to the palace that *Junius* would write no more; writing himself to his 'Carissimo Edmundo' that what alone prevents their meeting is a gouty twinge in the knee from 'dining yesterday with an arch-

bishop;’ found himself, in that supreme prosperity, suddenly and contemptuously struck in the face, with a blow that appalled him. To believe that Burke’s was the hand so lifted against his friend; that the ‘vagabond’ was told to ‘keep to his pantomimes;’ by one who so lately had confessed the dearest obligations to him; would be to fix upon Burke an incredible imputation of dishonour. I do not even believe, that, if he had taken any part in the letters (though far from supposing that some portion of the secret may not have fallen into his reluctant keeping), he would have continued to sit down at their common Club table, in all the frankness of familiar intercourse, with the well-abused Antony Chamier. The stronger presumption is, that in his ordinary daily duties as secretary in the War Office, Chamier sat much nearer *Junius* than ever he sat in Gerrard Street. But in clearing Burke of this remarkable authorship, which would have detracted from his character in proportion as it added to his fame (for it matters little that the hilt is diamond-studded or the blade of unequalled temper, if the rapier be drawn only in the dark), it is not so easy to clear him of having so shaped his course somewhat later, as to show he still winced from the charge. Now was the time, profiting by the opportunities of George Grenville’s death, and the general party confusion created by Wilkes and *Junius*, to have freed both himself and the Rockinghams; now was the time to have so enlarged the battle-field for both, as to bring in issue something greater than the predominance of Whig families with Whig principles: yet now,



even while his was the solitary voice that invoked retribution for the most infamous crime of nations, the partition of Poland, he had no thought or wish to throw for a higher stake in politics and government, than a premiership for Rockingham and an exoteric paymastership for himself. 'My dear Lord,' he said to Richmond, 'you dissipate your mind with too great a variety of minute pursuits.' 'My dear Burke,' said the Duke, 'you have more merit than any man in keeping us together.' And with that he was content. He kept them together. They became in time of greater importance to him than those pure principles, than that practically just and disinterested policy, with which his counsels had first helped to connect them; and which, carried now to their farther verge and just extent, might have freed both the party and the country from all the trammels that distressed them. He drew himself more and more within the Rockingham ranks; toiled more and more to keep the popular power within a certain magic circle; and, while his genius was at work for the age that was to come, in eloquence as rich and various as its intuition seemed deep and universal, his temper was satisfied that the age in which he lived should be governed exclusively by the Richmonds and Rockinghams. 'You people of great families and hereditary trusts and fortunes, the great oaks that shade a country, and perpetuate your benefits from generation to generation, are not like such as I am, mere annual plants that perish with our season, and leave no sort of traces behind us.' And so around that

perishable fancy he placed all the supports of his noble imagination; till that which he thought eternal melted from his grasp, and left what he believed its mere transitory graces to survive and endure alone. He lived to see the greatest event which the history of the world had witnessed, and lived even so to misjudge it. What was temporary in its sin and terror, he shrank from as eternal; what was eternal in its heroism and grandeur, he spat upon as the folly of a day. There was not an intellect then existing in Europe to which that sudden advent of Democracy should have appealed so strongly as to Burke: yet through the mist of blood that surrounded its uprising he saw nothing but a demon-dance of exaggerated horror; and the noble, the beautiful, the ornamental, he thought blotted out of France, because, in the hollow semblances of these things, demons that for centuries had indeed been torturing Frenchmen were strangled and overthrown. But his earlier and later days were in closer sympathy than either friends or enemies have thought. He was too honest as well as great to be a renegade, though not to avoid *self*-deception; or effectually to resist those influences which all English society sanctioned, which hung around and depressed him in every step of his progress, which only at times he was able to thrust thoroughly aside, and which at last almost wholly overshadowed him. If he had not made himself the sport of his fancy and mere plaything of his imagination, instead of sovereign ruler over both, he could never have ministered throughout life, as he did, to the aristocratic requirements

of these Rockinghams and Richmonds. He consented to do this, and the end was but a part of the beginning. Already it was manifest, to one who could pierce through the over-refinings of his genius to its unavailing and unpractical issues. Was it strange that Goldsmith should have been that one? Was it strange that among all the men in familiar intercourse with him, or belonging to the society of which he was the leading ornament, he should first have heard the truth from that member of the circle whose opinions on such a theme perhaps all would have hailed with laughter? Burke was only upon the threshold of his troubled though great career; he had yet to live twenty-seven years of successes in every means employed, and of failures in every object sought; when Goldsmith conceived and wrote his imaginary epitaph. But its truth was prophetic. Through the exquisite levity of its tone appeared a weight and seriousness of thought, which was found applicable to every after movement in Burke's subsequent life; and now confirms as by the judgment of his time, the unsparing verdicts of history. But as yet it was Goldsmith's alone. What hitherto had fallen from Johnson showed no such perception as this; and it may be doubtful if the rest knew much more of the likeness than that the statesman's long speeches *did* detain him sadly from his dinner, and he too often arrived at table when his mutton was cold. It was not till many years later he obtained the name of the dinner-bell.

Here lies our good Edmund, whose genius was such,  
We scarcely can praise it, or blame it too much;

*Who, born for the universe, narrow'd his mind,  
 And to party gave up what was meant for mankind.  
 Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat,  
 To persuade Tommy Townshend to lend him a vote ;  
 Who, too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,  
 And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining.  
 Though equal to all things, for all things unfit :  
 Too nice for a statesman ; too proud for a wit ;  
 For a patriot, too cool ; for a drudge, disobedient ;  
 And too fond of the right, to pursue the expedient.  
 In short, 'twas his fate, unemploy'd, or in place, sir,  
 To eat mutton cold, and cut blocks with a razor.*

Tommy Townshend had confirmed in the last session the claim he formerly put forward to a mention here. Again he had attacked Johnson, with allusion to his *Falkland Islands* pamphlet, as a pensioner paid to abuse the opposition ; and again Burke had remained silent, leaving his friend's defence this time to Wedderburne, a recent deserter from the Whigs. And yet he might fairly enough, if less anxious at the moment for Townshend's go-between service, have spurned the charge against the great pamphleteer, that his pension had lately been increased to reward a hireling advocacy. Johnson laughed at it himself when Boswell named it to him, and said (justly enough) that Lord North had no such friendly disposition that way. But he added a curious illustration of the temper of the time. A certain 'airy lady' (Mrs. Cholmondely, Peg Woffington's sister, formerly named as one of Goldsmith's personal critics) had given him proof that even the private visitings of members of parliament were now watched ; and when he went himself to the prime minister on the business

of that pamphlet, though he went after dark and with all possible secrecy, he was quietly told in a day or two, '*Well! you have been with Lord North.*'

Some such suspicion against even poor Goldsmith, unpensioned as he was, broke out on the appearance of his *English History* in August. Yet a more innocent production could hardly have been imagined. It was simply a compilation, in his easy flowing style, from four historians he impartially characterised in his preface; and with as little of the feeling of being influenced by any, this book throughout had been written. 'They have each,' he says, speaking of Rapin, Carte, Smollett, and Hume, 'their peculiar admirers, in proportion as the reader is studious of political antiquities, fond of minute anecdote, a warm partizan, or a deliberate reasoner.' Nevertheless, passages of very harmless narrative were displayed in the papers as of very questionable tendency; he was asked if he meant to be the tool of a minister, as well as the drudge of a bookseller; he was reminded that the favour of a generous public (so generous at other people's cost), was better than the best of pensions; and he finally was warned against betraying his country 'for base and scandalous pay.' The poor publisher became alarmed, and a formal defence of the book appeared in the *Public Advertiser*. Tom was himself a critic, and had taken the field full armed for his friend (and his property). 'Have you seen,' he says in a letter to Granger, 'an impartial account of Goldsmith's *History of England*? If you want to know who was

'the writer of it, you will find him in Russell Street:  
'*but Mum!*'

Meanwhile Goldsmith had been steadily working at his new labour, had nearly finished his comedy, and was too quiet and busy in his country lodging to be much disturbed by those noises elsewhere. The farm-house still stands on a gentle eminence in what is called Hyde Lane, leading to Kenton, about three hundred yards from Hyde village, and looking over a pretty country in the direction of Hendon; and when Mr. Prior went in search of it some years since, he found still living in the neighbourhood the son of the farmer (a Mr. Selby) with whom the poet lodged, and in whose family the property of the house and farm remained. He found traditions of Goldsmith surviving, too: how he used now and then to wander into the kitchen from his own room in fits of study or abstraction, and the parlour used to be given up to him when he had visitors to tea; how Reynolds and Johnson had come out there, and he had once taken the young folks of the farm to see some strolling players at Hendon; how he had come home one night without his shoes, having left them stuck fast in a slough; and how he had an evil habit of reading in bed, and of putting out his candle by flinging his slipper at it. It is certain he was fond of this humble place. He told Johnson and Boswell that he believed the farmer's family thought him an odd character, similar to that in which *The Spectator* appeared to his landlady and her children. He was *The Gentleman*. And so content for the

present was he to continue here, that he had given up a summer visit into Lincolnshire, proposed in company with Reynolds, to see their friend Langton in his new character of Benedict. He had married, the previous year, one of those *three* Countess Dowagers of Rothes who had all of them the fortune to get second husbands at about the same time; and to 'Bennet Langton, Esq., at Langton, near Spilsby, in Lincolnshire,' it seems to have been Goldsmith's first business to write on his return to his chambers in the Temple. The pleasant letter has happily been preserved, and is dated from Brick Court, on the seventh of September.

"MY DEAR SIR, Since I had the pleasure of seeing you last, I have been almost wholly in the country at a farmer's house, quite alone, trying to write a comedy. It is now finished; but when or how it will be acted, or whether it will be acted at all, are questions I cannot resolve. I am therefore so much employed upon that, that I am under the necessity of putting off my intended visit to Lincolnshire for this season. Reynolds is just returned from Paris, and finds himself now in the case of a truant that must make up for his idle time by diligence. We have therefore agreed to postpone our journey till next summer, when we hope to have the honour of waiting upon Lady Rothes, and you, and staying double the time of our late intended visit. *We often meet, and never without remembering you.* I see Mr. Beauclerc very often both in town and country. He is now going directly forward to become a second Boyle: deep in chemistry and physics. Johnson has been down on a visit to a country parson, Doctor Taylor; and is returned to his old haunts at Mrs. Thrale's. Burke is a farmer, *en attendant* a better place; but visiting about too. Every soul is a visiting about and merry but myself. And that is hard too, as I have been trying

these three months to do something to make people laugh. *There have I been strolling about the hedges, studying jests with a most tragical countenance.* The *Natural History* is about half finished, and I will shortly finish the rest. *God knows I am tired of this kind of finishing, which is but bungling work ; and that not so much my fault as the fault of my scurvy circumstances.* They begin to talk in town of the Opposition's gaining ground ; the cry of liberty is still as loud as ever. I have published, or Davies has published for me, an *Abridgement of the History of England*, for which I have been a good deal abused in the newspapers, for betraying the liberties of the people. *God knows I had no thought for or against liberty in my head ; my whole aim being to make up a book of a decent size, that, as 'Squire Richard says, would do no harm to nobody.* However, they set me down as an arrant Tory, and consequently an honest man. *When you come to look at any part of it, you'll say that I am a sore Whig.* God bless you, and with my most respectful compliments to her Ladyship, I remain, dear Sir, your most affectionate humble servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

Though the Langton visit had been thus deferred, however, another new married couple claimed him soon after this letter ; and he could not, amidst all his scurvy circumstances, resist the temptation. *Little Comedy* had become Mrs. Bunbury, and he was asked to visit them at Barton. But his means were insufficient ; and for a time to anticipate them, he laid himself under fresh obligations to Newbery. Former money transactions between them, involving unfulfilled engagements for a new story, remained still uncanceled ; and Garrick still held an outstanding note of Newbery's, unpaid because of disputed claims on behalf of the elder Newbery's estate : but a better



understanding between the publisher and his creditor, on the faith of certain completed chapters of the long-promised tale, had now arisen ; and Garrick was in no humour to disturb it by reviving any claim of his. Recent courtesies and kindness had been heartily interchanged between the poet and the actor, and shewed how little on either side was at any time needed to have made these celebrated men fast friends. In the last three years they had met more frequently than at any previous time, at Mr. Beauclerc's, Lord Clare's, and Sir Joshua's ; and where there is anything to esteem, the more men know of each other the more they will wish to know. Thus, courtesies and good-nature had freely passed between them ; and hints of promise and acceptance for a new comedy (Hoadly warning Garrick soon after against 'giving in' to Doctor Goldsmith's *ridiculousity*) would appear to have been interchanged. What was lately written in the country (little better than a rough draught at present, it is probable) is for Covent Garden ; but he thinks he has so far succeeded as to have yet greater confidence for the future, and something of an understanding for a future dramatic effort seems certainly to have been agreed to. A new and strong link between them was supplied by the family Goldsmith is about to visit ; for Garrick was Bunbury's most familiar friend, and a leader in all the sports at Barton. What Goldsmith's ways and habits used to be there, a survivor of that happy circle lived to be still talking about not many years ago. 'Come now let us play the fool a little,' was his ordinary invitation to

mirth ; and he took part in every social game. Tricks were played upon his dress, which he suffered with imperturbable good humour ; he was inventive in garden buildings and operations, over which he blundered amazingly ; and if there was a piece of water in any part of the grounds, he commonly managed to tumble into it. Such were the recollections of those days ; with the not unimportant addition, that everybody in that circle respected, admired, and loved him. His fondness for flowers was a passion, which he was left to indulge without restraint ; here, at Lord Clare's, at Bennet Langton's, and at Beauclere's. Thus when Beau tells Lord Charlemont a couple of years hence, that if he won't come to London, the Club shall be sent to Ireland to drive him over in self defence, the terrors of his threat are, that Johnson shall spoil his books, Goldsmith pull his flowers, and (for a quite intolerable climax) Boswell *talk to him !* But most at the card-table does he seem to have spread contagious mirth : affecting nothing of the rigour of the game (whether it was loo or any other), playing in wild defiance of the chances, laughing at all advice, staking preposterously, and losing always as much as the moderate pool could absorb. With fascinating pleasantry he has himself described all this, in an answer to one of Mrs. Bunbury's invitations to Barton, wherein she had playfully counselled him to come to their Christmas party in his smart spring velvet coat, to bring a wig that he might dance with the haymakers in, and above all to follow her and her sister's advice in playing loo. His reply,

perhaps the most amusing and characteristic of all his letters, was published ten years ago by Sir Henry Bunbury. Between the mock gravity of its beginning and the farcical broad mirth of its close, flash forth the finest humour, the nicest compliments, and the most sprightly touches of character.

“MADAM, I read your letter with all that allowance which critical candour could require, but after all find so much to object to, and so much to raise my indignation, that I cannot help giving it a serious answer . . . I am not so ignorant, Madam, as not to see there are many sarcasms contained in it, and solecisms also. (Solecism is a word that comes from the town of Soleis in Attica, among the Greeks, built by Solon, and applied as we use the word Kidderminster for curtains from a town also of that name . . . but this is learning you have no taste for !) . . . I say, Madam, there are many sarcasms in it, and solecisms also. But not to seem an ill-natured critic, I'll take leave to quote your own words, and give you my remarks upon them as they occur. You begin as follows :

‘I hope my good Doctor, you soon will be here,  
And your spring-velvet coat very smart will appear,  
To open our ball the first day of the year.’

“Pray, Madam, where did you ever find the epithet ‘good,’ applied to the title of Doctor ? Had you called me ‘learned Doctor,’ or ‘grave Doctor,’ or ‘noble Doctor,’ it might be allowable, because they belong to the profession. But, not to cavil at trifles, you talk of my ‘spring-velvet coat,’ and advise me to wear it the first day in the year, that is, in the middle of winter ! . . . a spring-velvet coat in the middle of winter !!! That would be a solecism indeed ! and yet to increase the inconsistency, in another part of your letter you call me a beau. Now, on one side or other, you must be wrong. If I am a beau, I can never think of wearing a spring-velvet in winter : and if I am not a beau, why then, that explains itself. But let me go on to your two next strange lines :

‘And bring with you a wig, that is modish and gay,  
To dance with the girls that are makers of hay.’

“The absurdity of making hay at Christmas you yourself seem sensible of : you say your sister will laugh ; and so indeed she well may ! The Latins have an expression for a contemptuous kind of laughter, ‘naso contemnere adunco ;’ that is, to laugh with a crooked nose. She may

laugh at you in the manner of the antients if she thinks fit. But now I come to the most extraordinary of all extraordinary propositions, which is, to take your and your sister's advice in playing at loo. The presumption of the offer raises my indignation beyond the bounds of prose ; it inspires me at once with verse and resentment. I take advice ! and from whom ! You shall hear.

“ First let me suppose, what may shortly be true,  
 The company set, and the word to be, Loo :  
 All smirking, and pleasant, and big with adventure,  
 And ogling the stake which is fix'd in the centre.  
 Round and round go the cards, while I inwardly damn  
 At never once finding a visit from Pam.  
 I lay down my stake, apparently cool,  
 While the harpies about me all pocket the pool.  
 I fret in my gizzard, yet, cautious and sly,  
 I wish all my friends may be bolder than I :  
 Yet still they sit snugg, not a creature will aim  
 By losing their money to venture at fame.  
 'Tis in vain that at niggardly caution I scold,  
 'Tis in vain that I flatter the brave and the bold:  
 All play their own way, and they think me an ass, . .  
 ‘ What does Mrs. Bunbury ! ’ . . ‘ I, sir ! I pass.’  
 ‘ Pray what does Miss Horneck ! take courage, come do,’ . .  
 ‘ Who, I ! let me see, sir, why I must pass too.  
 Mr. Bunbury frets, and I fret like the devil,  
 To see them so cowardly, lucky, and civil.  
 Yet still I sit snugg, and continue to sigh on,  
 'Till, made by my losses as bold as a lion,  
 I venture at all, while my avarice regards  
 The whole pool as my own . . ‘ Come give me five cards.’  
 ‘ Well done ! ’ cry the ladies ; ‘ Ah, Doctor, that 's good !  
 The pool 's very rich, . . ah ! the Doctor is loo'd ! ’  
 Thus foil'd in my courage, on all sides perplex,  
 I ask for advice from the lady that 's next :  
 ‘ Pray, ma'am, be so good as to give your advice ;  
 Don't you think the best way is to venture for 't twice ! ’  
 ‘ I advise,’ cries the lady, ‘ to try it, I own . .  
 ‘ Ah ! the Doctor is loo'd ! Come, Doctor, put down.’  
 Thus, playing, and playing, I still grow more eager,  
 And so bold, and so bold, I 'm at last a bold beggar.  
 Now, ladies, I ask, if law-matters your're skill'd in,

Whether crimes such as yours should not come before Fielding :  
 For giving advice that is not worth a straw,  
 May well be call'd picking of pockets in law ;  
 And picking of pockets, with which I now charge ye,  
 Is, by quinto Elizabeth, Death without Clergy.  
 What justice, when both to the Old Bailey brought !  
 By the gods, I 'll enjoy it, tho' 'tis but in thought !  
 Both are plac'd at the bar, with all proper decorum,  
 With bunches of fennell, and nosegays before 'em ;  
 Both cover their faces with mobs and all that,  
 But the judge bids them, angrily, take off their hat.  
 When uncover'd, a buzz of inquiry runs round, . .  
 ' Pray what are their crimes ? ' . . ' They 've been pilfering found.'  
 ' But, pray, who have they pilfer'd ? ' . . ' A Doctor, I hear.'  
 ' What, yon solemn-faced, odd-looking man that stands near !'  
 ' The same.' . . ' What a pity ! how does it surprise one,  
*Two handsomer culprits I never set eyes on !*  
 Then their friends all come round me with cringing and leering,  
 To melt me to pity, and soften my swearing.  
 First Sir Charles advances with phrases well-strung,  
 ' Consider, dear Doctor, the girls are but young.'  
 ' The younger the worse,' I return him again,  
 ' It shews that their habits are all dyed in grain.'  
 ' But then they 're so handsome, one's bosom it grieves.'  
 ' What signifies *handsome*, when people are thieves !'  
 ' But where is your justice ? their cases are hard.'  
 ' What signifies *justice* ? I want the *reward*.

“ There 's the parish of Edmonton offers forty pounds ; there 's the parish of St. Leonard Shoreditch offers forty pounds ; there 's the parish of Tyburn, from the Hog-in-the-pound to St. Giles's watch-house, offers forty pounds, . . I shall have all that if I convict them ! ” . .

“ But consider their case, . . it may yet be your own !  
 And see how they kneel ! Is your heart made of stone !'  
 This moves : . . so at last I agree to relent,  
 For ten pounds in hand, and ten pounds to be spent.

“ I challenge you all to answer this : I tell you, you cannot. It cuts deep. But now for the rest of the letter : and next . . but I want room . . so I believe I shall battle the rest out at Barton some day next week. . . I don't value you all ! O. G.

To battle it out in London was a harder game, and the stakes were growing somewhat desperate. Francis Newbery seems in some shape to have revived the question of their old accounts on his return; and he appears in that publisher's books as having *paid* twenty pounds, a new and arduous character. But he wears a cheerful face still; and has his grave kind word for the poor struggling adventurer, or his gay sprightly prologue for the ambitious amateur author. A poor Irish youth told in after life how he had flung himself in despair on a seat in the Temple Gardens, eyeing the water wistfully, when the famous Goldsmith came up to him, talked him into good spirits, brought him into his chambers, and set him afloat in the world by giving him chapters of Buffon to translate. This poor client used to grieve when he saw his patron subject to frequent fits of depression; and tells us that he cried bitterly, and a blank came over his heart, when he afterwards heard of his death. The livelier client was a young man of fortune named Cradock, living in Leicestershire, who, with his wife and a translation of one of Voltaire's tragedies, had come lately to London, very eager about plays and players, being a clever amateur actor as well as writer (he liked to be called little Cradock, and fancied himself quite a private little Garrick), and with introductions to the celebrated people. Goldsmith met him at Yates the actor's house; their mutual knowledge of Lord Clare soon put them on familiar terms; and a prologue for *Zobeide* was readily promised. 'Mr. Goldsmith,' says the note which accompanied it, 'presents his

‘ best respects to Mr. Cradock; has sent him the Prologue such as it is. He cannot take time to make it better. He begs he will give Mr. Yates the proper instructions; and so, even so, he commits him to fortune and the publick.’ He had himself dropped the title of *Doctor* at this time, says one of his friends, but the world would not let him lose it. The prologue, very wittily built on the voyage to Otaheite which was making Lieutenant Cook somewhat famous just now, was spoken, not by Yates, but by Quick, in the character of a sailor.

The influence of Lord Clare is also to be detected in the next poetical product of his pen. This was a *Lament* for the death of the Princess Dowager of Wales, Robert Nugent’s old political mistress and patron, who died in February 1772; before the close of which month the *Threnodia Augustalis*, announced in the papers to be ‘ written for the purpose, by a gentleman of acknowledged literary merit,’ was recited and sung with appropriate music at Mrs. Cornely’s fashionable rooms in Soho Square. Cradock, whose theatrical accomplishments included a taste for music, seems to have helped him in the adaptation of the parts; and has published a note from Goldsmith in which he declares that ‘ he feels himself quite uneasy at not being permitted to have his instructions upon those parts where he must necessarily be defective. He will have a rehearsal on Monday,’ he adds (the note is dated on Sunday), ‘ when if Mr. Cradock would come, and afterwards take a bit of mutton chop, it would add to his other obligations.’ The

thing was hardly worth even so much trouble, for it was purely an occasional piece. Though not without passages of considerable merit, it was written (as the advertisements prefixed acquaint us) in a couple of days; and it did not appear with his name attached to it till forty years after his death. Cradock then gave it to his friend Nichols, who handed it to Chalmers. His connection with its authorship escaped even Boswell, who, yet busier and more inquisitive than of old, came up from his Scotch practice for his annual London visit not a month after it was performed, more than ever amazed at the amount of Goldsmith's celebrity. 'Sir,' he said to Johnson somewhat later, 'Goldsmith has acquired more fame than all the officers last war who were not generals!' 'Why sir,' answered Johnson, 'you will find ten thousand fit to do what they did, before you find one who does what Goldsmith has done. You must consider that a thing is valued according to its rarity. A pebble that paves the street is in itself more useful than the diamond upon a lady's finger.' But this did not satisfy Boswell, who had now in truth a strong, secret, and to himself perhaps only half-confessed reason, for his very ludicrous jealousy and impatience. He fancied Goldsmith likely to be Johnson's biographer, and that was an office he already coveted and had selected for himself. For now began that series of questions, '*what did you do sir, what did you say sir,*' which afterwards forced from their victim the energetic protest: 'Sir, I will not be put to the *question*. Don't you consider, sir, that these are not the manners



' of a gentleman ? I will not be baited with *what* and *why* ; what is this ? what is that ? why is a cow's tail long ? why is a fox's tail bushy ?' In all which, notwithstanding, Boszy persisted : forgetting so much *more* of the manners of a gentleman as even to lay down his knife and fork, take out his tablets, and report speeches in the middle of a dinner-table ; submitting to daily rebuffs, reproofs, and indignities ; satisfied to be played over and drenched by the fountain ' of wit ;' content not only to be called a dunce, a parasite, a coxcomb, an eavesdropper, and a fool, but even faithfully to report what he calls the ' keen sarcastic wit,' the ' variety of degrading images,' the ' rudeness,' and the ' ferocity,' of which he was made the object : bent all the more firmly upon the one design which seized and occupied the whole of such faculties as he possessed, and living in such manner to achieve it as to have made himself immortal as his hero. ' You have but two topics, sir,' exclaimed Johnson ; ' yourself and me. I am sick of both.' Happily for us, nothing could sicken Boswell of either ; and by one of the most moderately wise men that ever lived, the masterpiece of English biography was written. What would we now give to have had a Boswell for every Johnson ! to have had in attendance on all our immortals, as much self-complacent folly with as much shrewd clear insight ; the same lively talent to do justice to their sayings, the same reverence to devote it to that humble service, and the same conceit full-proof against every degradation it involved. We have but to turn to

the biography of any other man of letters, to comprehend our debt of gratitude to Boswell; we have but to remember how fruitless is the quest, when we would seek to stand face to face with any other as famous Englishman. 'So, sir,' said Johnson to Cibber, 'I find you knew Mr. Dryden?' 'Knew him!' said Cibber. 'O Lord! I was as well acquainted with him as if he had been my own brother.' 'Then,' rejoined the other, 'you can tell me some anecdotes of him?' 'Oh yes,' exclaimed Colley, 'a thousand! why, we used to meet him continually at a club at Button's. I remember as well as if it were but yesterday, that when he came into the room in winter-time, he used to go and sit close by the fire in one corner; and that in summer-time, he would always go and sit in the window.' Such was the information Johnson got from Cibber as to the manners and habits of Dryden. Such, or little better, but for Boswell, might have been our knowledge of Johnson.

Early in April he dined in company with Johnson and Goldsmith at General Oglethorpe's, and 'fired up' the brave old General by making a question of the moral propriety of duelling. 'I ask you first, sir,' said Goldsmith, 'what would you do if you were affronted?' 'I answered,' says Boswell, 'I should think it necessary to fight.' 'Why then,' was the reply, 'that solves the question.' 'No, sir,' interposed Johnson, 'it does *not* solve the question:' which he thereupon proceeded himself to solve, by regretting the superfluity of refinement which existed in society on the subject of affronts, and admitting that duelling must be

tolerated so long as such notions should prevail. After this (the General having meanwhile poured a little wine on the table, and, at Johnson's request, described with a wet finger the siege of Belgrade), a question was started of how far people who disagree in a capital point can live in friendship together. Johnson said they might. Goldsmith said they could not, as they had not the *idem velle atque idem nolle*, the same likings and the same aversions. 'Why, sir,' returned Johnson, 'you must shun the subject as to which you disagree. For instance, I can live very well with Burke: I love his knowledge, his genius, his diffusion, and affluence of conversation; but I would not talk to him of the Rockingham party.' 'But, sir,' retorted Goldsmith, 'when people live together who have something as to which they disagree, and which they want to shun, they will be in the situation mentioned in the story of Bluebeard: *You may look into all the chambers but one*. But we should have the greatest inclination to look into that chamber, to talk of that subject.' Johnson hereupon exclaimed loudly, 'Sir, I am not saying that *you* could live in friendship with a man from whom you differ as to some point; I am only saying that *I* could do it. You put me in mind of Sappho in *Ovid*.' Goldsmith had said too clever a thing, and got punished for it. So it was with Percy, very often; so with Joseph Warton; so with Dean Barnard; so with Langton; so even with Beauclerc and Reynolds. What Miss Anna Seward called 'the wit and aweless impoliteness of the stupendous creature' bore down every one before it. 'His forcible spirit

'and impetuosity of manner,' says Boswell, 'spared neither 'sex nor age. I have seen even Mrs. Thrale stunned.' Yet she never said more when she recovered, than '*Oh dear good man!*' And Dean Barnard, invoking the aid of his friends against the aweless impoliteness, and submitting himself to be taught by their better accomplishments, has told us in lively verse with what good humour it was borne by Reynolds.

"Dear knight of Plympton, teach me how  
To suffer with unclouded brow  
And smile serene as thine,  
The jest uncouth and truth severe;  
Like thee to turn my deafest ear,  
And calmly drink my wine.

"If I have thoughts and can't express 'em,  
Gibbon shall teach me how to dress 'em  
In terms select and terse;  
Jones teach me modesty and Greek,  
Smith how to think, Burke how to speak,  
And Beauclerc to converse."

Soon after the dinner at Oglethorpe's, Goldsmith returned to his Edgeware lodging, and was sometime busied with the *Animated Nature*. No doubt it was a task he best worked at in the country: for though the general defect of the book is that it too manifestly seems a compilation (in which we are occasionally left to doubt, too, whether he believes most implicitly the credulous romance of the early naturalists and travellers, or the scientific soberness of the great Frenchman his contemporary), there are yet many passages of exquisite *country* observation in it; and not a few in which the grace of diction, the choice of perfect and finely finished

imagery, and an elegant clearness and beauty in the tone of reflection, may compare with his best original compositions, in poetry or prose. On the whole it was a surprising piece of task-work, allowance being made for the circumstances in which its drudgery was undergone, and which the course his necessities now obliged him to take did not tend to relieve. He got Griffin to advance him what remained to be paid upon it; acknowledged the receipt and executed the assignment in June; and had then received and paid away the whole eight hundred guineas, while upwards of a third of his labour remained still unperformed. Nor was this all. He had involved himself in an undertaking to Newbery, to supply another tale like the *Vicar of Wakefield*; some years had elapsed since the unredeemed promise was made; and a portion of a tale submitted to the publisher had lately been returned with intimation of disapproval. It appears to have been a narrative version of the plot of the *Good-natur'd Man*, and on that ground objected to. So much was long remembered by Miss Mary Horneck, to whom, and to her sister, Goldsmith afterwards read such chapters as he had written; and it may be worth stating in connection with this fact, which Hazlitt heard from Mrs. Gwyn herself in Northcote's painting room, that Southey notices in his *Omniana* a fraud he supposes to have been practised on Goldsmith's reputation in France, by the announcement, in a list of books at the end of a volume published in the year of his death, of a translation from the English entitled '*Histoire de Francois Wills, ou*

*le Triomphe de la Bienfaisance, par l'auteur du Ministre de Wakefield.* It is suggested that this may have been the incomplete chapters left by Goldsmith, thought unworthy of publication here, concluded by some inferior hand, and sold to the French market; but it does not appear that '*Francis Wills*' was ever seen in the form of a book, and more probably the announcement had been made on the faith of some statement by Francis Newbery, on the failure of which it fell to the ground.

Another labour that occupied Goldsmith in the Edgeware cottage was the abridgment of his *Roman History*: and of this kind of task-work it may be said, as of the *Animated Nature*, that such defects of imperfect information as it exhibited, were counterbalanced by simplicity of diction and unaffectedness of style; and that schoolboys have more profited by the one than lost by the other. Johnson said he would make a very fine natural history book, though, if he could distinguish a cow from a horse, *that* he believed to be the extent of his scientific knowledge; and the same will have to be said of his other history books, even though his general historical knowledge should be measured by the anecdote of Gibbon's visit to him in the Temple some few months hence, when he looked up from the manuscript of his *Grecian History* which he happened to be writing, asked of his scholarly visitor the name of the Indian king who gave Alexander so much trouble, and, on Gibbon facetiously answering *Montezuma*, gravely wrote it down. But his ignorance in this and other respects I

have shown to be absurdly over-stated. The purse he had so often to take out, was not so often empty. What Johnson says may be true of the few last years of his life, that he was at no pains to fill his mind with knowledge ; that, transplanting it from one place to another, it did not settle, and so he could not tell what was in his own books : but it should be limited by those years of his life, judged by the distractions which then beset him, and accompanied with the admission which Johnson did not omit, that the world had taught him knowledge where books had not ; that whatever he wrote he did better than any other man could do ; that he well deserved his place in Westminster Abbey, and that every year he lived he would have deserved it better. It is astonishing how many thoughts, familiar now as household words, originated with Goldsmith, even to the famous saying that it was to conceal our thoughts that language had been given us ; while, loose and ill considered as much of his philosophy occasionally is, his *Essays* and *Citizen of the World* contain views of life and economy, political and social, which for subtlety and truth Burke never surpassed, nor the far-seeing wisdom of Adam Smith himself. To that fragmentary way of writing, the resource of his days of poverty, his present narrow necessities seemed again to have driven him back ; for beside the Edgeware labours named, the latest of the *Essays* in the collection which now bears that title were written in the present year. They appeared in a new magazine, started by his acquaintance Captain Thompson and other members of the old

Wednesday's club : and comprised a humorous paper of imaginary Scotch marriages ; a whimsical narrative of a noted sleep-walker ; a gracefully written notice of Shensstone's Leasowes, full of sympathy for the kind thoughtful poet ; and a capital attack on the sentimental school of comedy.

The latter showed his renewed anxieties in the direction of the stage. It was almost his only hope indeed, in the desperate distress to which he appeared to be verging ; yet the old fears had been interposed by Colman, on the old hackneyed ground. The comedy of which the first draught had been completed a year before, and which in the interval had been recast and strengthened, was now in the hands of the Covent Garden manager ; whose tedious suspended judgments made Goldsmith long for even Garrick's tender mercies. Indeed he had no present reason to think that the Drury Lane manager would not have treated him with unusual consideration, if his previous promise had not bound him to the other house. For the recent good understanding between them continued, and is observable in many little incidents of the time. The libellers who knew Garrick's weakness, for example, now assailed him through the side of Goldsmith ; and not only was the latter accused of harbouring low writers busied in abusing his new ally (which Garrick had sense enough to laugh at), but Kenrick accused them both of conspiring against himself, and taunted the Drury Lane manager with his ' new literary favorites.' It is true, Garrick cleverly retorted, ' my literary favorites are



'men of the greatest honour and genius in this nation, and have all had the honour of being particularly abused by you. But your pretence of my having, in conjunction with Doctor Goldsmith, abused you in the *Morning Chronicle*, I most solemnly protest is false.' That still he has his laugh against Goldsmith seems also obvious enough, but it is all in good humour. 'Let him,' writes his correspondent Richard Burke from Grenada (where Edmund had obtained him an appointment while the Rockinghams were in power), 'bring home as many French airs as he pleases; I would have his song continue to be plain English. His poetry is all I can now have a concern in. Half the convex world intrudes between me and his old or new acquired accomplishments.' And better would Garrick have employed himself in giving Goldsmith practical proof, in connection with his new comedy, of the new interest in him which his *Correspondence* thus evinces, than in pursuing that luckless labour of management which just now excluded every other. One of the greatest mistakes of his life was committed at the end of this year. He had made many foul assaults upon Shakespeare in the way of stage adaptation; had without scruple turned plays into operas, and comedies into farces; had professed to correct with his own trash, the trash of Davenant, Cibber, and Tate; had profaned the affecting catastrophe of *Romeo*, made a pantomime of the *Midsummer Dream*, and given what Bishop Warburton called 'an elegant form to that monstrous composition' the *Winter's Tale*: but he did

not achieve his master-stroke till the close of the present year, when he produced *Hamlet with Alterations*. This he very justly characterised as the most impudent thing he had ever done in his life; but having sworn, as he says, not to leave the stage till he had rescued 'that noble play' from all the rubbish of the fifth act, he had cleared off the rubbish in a way that Voltaire himself might have envied. The *Grave-diggers* were gone, *Osrick* was gone, *Yorick* was gone; *Hamlet* had come back from England such a very tiger, that any body hearing his *ohs* and *ahs*, his startling exclamations and furious resolves, would have taken him for Cibber's *Richard*: more deplorable than all, men of wit and knowledge were found to second this mountebank impertinence; and even George Steevens (it is difficult to believe he was not laughing at Garrick, as he laughed at everybody) recommended that the omissions should be thrown into a farce, to be acted immediately after the tragedy. But though the stage was degraded by this absurdity for eight years, its author never dared to print it; for 'it was greatly disliked by the million,' says Mr. Victor the prompter, 'who love Shakespeare with all his glorious absurdities, and will not suffer a bold intruder to cut him up.' Not long before, Foote had proposed a parody on the Stratford *Ode*, in which a fellow to represent the nation should do homage to Garrick, reverentially repeating 'A nation's taste depends on you, perhaps a nation's virtue too;' to which Garrick should graciously answer 'Cock-a-doodle-doo!' *Hamlet with Additions* now justified Foote's witty malice: and its

author had better never have gone to France, nor heard the name of Voltaire.

France had this year, in Burke, a visitor from a more real stage ; yet who brought back such visions of the court he had seen at Versailles, and of the young dauphiness Marie Antoinette, as might better have become one of Garrick's enchanted palaces than that hideous mockery of the Trianon. He saw little but an age of chivalry extant still, where something should have been visible to him of an age of starvation and retribution : and through the glittering formal state that surrounded the pomp of Louis the well-beloved, not a shadow of the antic Hunger, mocking the state and grinning at the pomp, would seem to have revealed itself to Edmund Burke. 'Beautiful' says Carlyle, in his immortal *History*, 'beautiful if seen from afar, resplendent 'like a sun ; seen near at hand, a mere sun's atmosphere, 'hiding darkness, confused ferment of ruin !' Sixteen years earlier, Goldsmith had seen it near at hand : and now he and Burke were together on his friend's return ; and together visited an exhibition in the Haymarket which had in it about as much reality as that Versailles show. This was *The Puppets* in Panton Street. Great was the celebrity of those small, well-pulled, ingenious performers ; for nobody could detect the wires. Burke praised the dexterity of one puppet in particular, who tossed a pike with military precision ; and 'Psha !' remarked Goldsmith with some warmth, 'I can do it better myself.' Boswell would have us believe that he was seriously jealous of those so famous

fantoccini! 'He went home with Mr. Burke to supper, and broke his shin by attempting to exhibit to the company how much better he could jump over a stick than the puppets.' The anecdote is too pleasant to be gravely objected to; but might he not only mean that the puppets jumped even worse than he did? The actual world and the puppet-show are moreover so much alike, that what was meant for a laugh at the world might have passed for an attack on the puppet-show. And here it will be perhaps worth adding, that from one who, in the larger of the two theatres, and with notable reference to those very puppets of Versailles, was afterwards doomed to be busy in both pulling and snapping the strings, Goldsmith received this year a quite voluntary tribute to his fame. A correspondent 'in the humble station of an officer of excise,' sent him a pamphlet memorial of the case of his brother officers; told him that the literary fame of Doctor Goldsmith (whom he addresses *Honoured Sir*) had induced him to present it; said that he had some few questions to trouble Doctor Goldsmith with, and should esteem his company for an hour or two, to partake of a bottle of wine or anything else, as a singular favour; and added that the Doctor's unknown humble servant and admirer would take the liberty of waiting on him in a day or two. The writer was Thomas Paine, whom this pamphlet on excise introduced to Franklin, whom Franklin within twelve months sent to America, who transacted memorable business in the establishment of a republic there, and who became subsequently citizen of

another as famous republic, and Deputy in its National Convention for the department of Calais.

Goldsmith had suffered severe illness in the summer from a disease induced by sedentary habit ; on its return in the autumn, had obtained such relief from the fashionable fever medicine of the day, as to become almost as great a bigot as Horace Walpole to the miraculous powers of James's powders ; and now, after visits to Mr. Cradock, Lord Clare, and Mr. Langton, was settled for the winter in London. This was the year when Northcote became Reynolds's pupil, and he remembered none of the Leicester Square visitors of the time so vividly as Goldsmith. He had expressed great eagerness to see him ; soon afterward he came to dine ; and ' this is Doctor Goldsmith,' said Sir Joshua, ' pray why did you wish to see him ?' Confused by the suddenness of the question, which was put with designed abruptness, the youth could only stammer out ' because he is a *notable* man ;' whereupon (the word in its ordinary sense appearing oddly misapplied) both Goldsmith and Reynolds burst out laughing, and the latter protested that in future his friend should always be *the notable man*. Northcote explains that he meant to say he was a man of note, or eminence ; and adds that he was very unaffected and good-natured, but seemed totally ignorant of the art of painting, and indeed often confessed as much with great gaiety. Nevertheless, he used at Burke's table to plunge into art discussions with Barry, when the latter returned from abroad the year following this ; and

would punish Barry's dislike of Sir Joshua, manifested even so early, by disputing the subtlest dogmas with that irritable genius. With Burke himself, Northcote says, he overheard him sharply disputing one day in Sir Joshua's painting room about the character of the king; when, so grateful was he for some recent patronage of his comedy (it was a few months after the present date), and so outrageous and unsparing was Burke's anti-monarchical invective, that, unable any longer to endure it, he took up his hat and left the room. Another argument which Northcote overheard, at Sir Joshua's dinner-table, was between Johnson and Goldsmith; when the latter put *Venice Preserved* next to Shakespeare for its merit as an acting play, and was loudly contradicted by the other. 'Pooh!' roared Johnson. 'There are not forty decent lines in the whole of it. What stuff are these!' And then he quoted, as prose, *Pierre's* scornful reproach to the womanish *Jaffier*. 'What feminine tales hast thou been listening to, of unair'd shirts, catarrhs, and tooth-ache, got by thin-soled shoes?' To which the unconvinced disputant sturdily replied, 'True! To be sure! That is very like Shakespeare.' Goldsmith had no great knowledge of the higher secrets of criticism, and was guilty of occasional heresies against the master-poet; but here his notion was right enough. He meant to say that Shakespeare had the art possessed only by the greatest poets, of placing in natural connection the extremes of the familiar and imaginative: which Garrick would have done well to remember before he began to botch *Hamlet*.

Another impression which remained with Northcote's old age, derived from these scenes of his youth, was that the 'set' at Sir Joshua's were somewhat intolerant of such as did not belong to their party, jealous of enlarging it, and chary of admitting merit to any new comer. Thus he remembered a new poem coming out that was sent to Reynolds, who had instructed his servant Ralph to bring it in after dinner: when presently Goldsmith laid hold of it, fell into a rage with it before he had read a dozen lines, and exclaiming, 'what wretched stuff is here! what cursed nonsense *that* is!' kept all the while marking the passages with his thumb nail as if he would cut them in pieces. 'Nay, 'nay,' said Sir Joshua, snatching the volume, 'don't do so: 'you shall not spoil my book, neither.' In like manner, Northcote adds, he recollects their making a dead set at Cumberland. They never admitted him as one of themselves; they excluded him from the Club; Reynolds never asked him to dinner; and from any room where he was, Goldsmith would have flung out as if a dragon had been there. It was not till his life was just about to close that he became tolerant of the condescending attentions of the fretful Cumberland.

To these recollections of Northcote, some by Mr. Cradock may be added. When it was proposed one day to go down to Lichfield, and, in honour of Johnson and Garrick, act the *Beaux Stratagem* among themselves there, all the famous people of the Club taking part in it, 'then,' exclaimed Goldsmith, 'I shall certainly play *Scrub*. I should like of

'all things to try my hand at that character.' One would have liked no less to have seen him play it, and heard the roar that would have given a personal turn to the cunning serving-man's famous assertion, 'I believe *they talked of me, for they laughed consumedly.*' But his brogue would have been a difficulty. Even Burke's brogue was no small disadvantage to him; and Goldsmith had hardly improved his, since those Dunciad days when he would object to the exquisite bad rhyming of *key* with *be* ('let *key* be called '*kee*, and then it will rhyme with *be*,') said one of his Griffith's criticisms, 'but not otherwise'): indeed, says Cooke, he rather cultivated his brogue than got rid of it. Malone's authority would have us doubt, too, whether his emphasis, even for *Scrub*, would always have been right; seeing he gave an example one day to prove that poets ought to read verses better than other men, by beginning the ballad *At Upton on the Hill* with a most emphatic *ON*. Farquhar's humour, nevertheless, might have gained as much as it lost; and the private play could not have spared such an actor. Richard Burke reinforced the party soon after this with his wit and his whim ('now breaking a jest and now breaking a limb'); Garrick having succeeded, where Edmund supposed that his own influence had failed, in getting him a year's leave of absence from Grenada: and his return led to a temporary dining-club at the St. James's coffee-house, the limited numbers of the Gerrard Street Club excluding both him and Garrick from present membership there. Cumberland, who became afterwards an occasional guest, correctly



attributes its origin to Burke; though he misstates everything else connected with it. Here Cradock remembered to have heard much animated talk, in which Richard Burke made himself very prominent, and seemed the most free and easy of the company. Its members used to dine at each other's houses also, less frequently; and Goldsmith indulged himself now and then in very oddly assorted assemblages at his chambers after dinner, which (in allusion to the fashionable ball-rooms of the day) he called his 'little Cornelys.' More rarely, at meetings which became afterwards more famous, the titled people who jostled against writers and artists at Shelburne House in Berkeley Square, might be seen wondering or smiling at the simple-looking Irishman who had written the *Deserted Village*. There were Mrs. Vesey's parties, too, more choice and select than Mrs. Montagu's, her friend and imitator; and at both we have traces of Goldsmith: 'Your wild genius,' as Mrs. Vesey's stater friend Mrs. Carter calls him. These ladies had got the notion of their blue-stocking routs from the Du Duffands, and L'Espinasses, at the last French peace; but alas! the Montesquieus, Voltaires, and Du Châtelets, the De Launays, Hainaults, De Choiseuls, and Condorcets, were not always forthcoming in Hill Street or Portman Square. In truth they seem to have been dull enough, these much-talked-about réunions; though sometimes enlivened by Mrs. Vesey's forgetfulness of her own name, and at all times sparkling with Mrs. Montagu's diamonds and bows. Mrs. Thrale's were better; and though the lively little lady

made a favourite jest of Goldsmith, he passed happy days with Johnson both in Southwark and Streatham. Still, perhaps, his happiest time was when he had Johnson to himself; when there were no listeners to talk for; when, to his half-childish frolicking absurdities, Johnson lowered all that was predominant or intolerant in his great fine nature; and together they came sporting from Gerrard Street to the Temple, or, when the Club did not meet, had supper by themselves at an adjoining tavern in Soho. This was that once famous *Jack's* (since *Walker's*) in Dean Street, kept by a singer of Garrick's company (Jack Roberts), and patronised by Garrick and his friends: which, in all but the life that departed from it when *they* departed, to this day exists unchanged; quite unvexed by disturbance or improvement; haunted by the ghosts of guests that are gone, but not much visited by guests that live; a venerable relic of the *still life* of Goldsmith's age, possessed by an owner who is venerable as itself, and whose memory, faithful to the past, now lives altogether with the shades that inhabit there. Of many pleasant 'tête-a-tête suppers' this was the scene; and here Goldsmith would seem boldly to have perpetrated very ancient sallies of wit, to half-grumbling half-laughing accompaniment from Johnson. 'Sir,' said the sage one night, as they supped off rumps and kidneys, 'these rumps are pretty little things; but then a man must eat a great many of them before he fills his belly.' 'Aye, but how many of them' asked Goldsmith innocently, 'would reach to the

‘moon?’ ‘To the moon!’ laughed Johnson. ‘Aye, Goldy, I fear that exceeds your calculation.’ ‘Not at all, sir,’ says Goldsmith, ‘I think I could tell.’ ‘Pray then sir,’ says the other, ‘let us hear.’ ‘Why,’ and here Goldsmith instinctively, no doubt, got as far from Johnson as he could, ‘*one*, if it were long enough.’ ‘Well sir, I have deserved it,’ growled the philosopher. ‘I should not have provoked so foolish an answer by so foolish a question.’

But Goldsmith’s mirth is from a heart now ill at ease. Every day’s uncertainty as to his comedy is become fraught with serious consequence to him, and Colman still delays his answer. The recollection of former mortifications no doubt sadly recurred, and with it came back the old distrust and bitter self-misgivings. Cooke informs us that he accidentally, at this time, met with an old acquaintance in a chop-house (most probably himself, for he elsewhere complains that Goldsmith’s acquisition of more important friends had made their latter intercourse infrequent), and mentioning that he had written a comedy about which the manager seemed to have great doubts, asked him to listen to the plot and give him his candid opinion of it. The Doctor, Cooke proceeds, then began to tell the particulars of his plot, in his strange, uncouth, deranged manner, from which his friend the critic could only make out that the principal part of the business turned upon one gentleman mistaking the house of another for an inn: at which the critic shook his head, and said ‘he was afraid the audience, under their then sentimental

'impressions, would think it too broad and farcical for 'comedy.' Goldsmith looked very serious at this; paused for some time; and at last, taking the other by the hand, 'piteously' exclaimed, 'I am much obliged to you, my dear friend, for the candour of your opinion: but it is all I can do; for alas I find that my genius, if ever I had any, has 'of late totally deserted me.' Alas, poor Goldy! It was the feeling that prompted this, and no other, which also prompted his innocent, vain absurdities. 'How well this 'post-boy drives,' said Johnson to Boswell, rubbing his hands with joy for the rapid motion. 'Now if Goldy were 'here, he'd say he could drive better.' Simply because he could not drive at all. Sadly distrusting what he could do, he thought to set the balance straight by bragging of what he could not.

But never so little called for as in the case of his comedy, was the tone of doleful distrust. He had again taken his stand on the sincere broad ground of character and humour, where time has fixed him so firmly. The final critical verdict has passed, which saves any further criticism on this last legacy of laughter he was now to leave us. Many are the sterling comedies that hold possession of the stage, cleverly exacting much calm enjoyment, while they chasten all tendency to intemperate mirth: but the family of the *Hardcastles*, *Young Marlow*, and *Tony Lumpkin*, are not akin to those. Let the manager be chary of introducing them, who desires to keep the enjoyment of his audience within merely reasonable bounds. When *Mr. Hardcastle*, anxious

to initiate *Diggory* and his too familiar fellow-servants into the small decorums of social life, warns them against talkativeness, and tells them that if he should happen to say a good thing or tell a good story at table, they are not all of them to burst out laughing as if they formed part of the company, *Diggory* makes prompt answer, 'Then ecod, ' your worship must not tell the story of *Ould Grouse in the gun room* : I can't help laughing at that . . he ! he ! ' he ! . . for the soul of me. We have laughed at that ' these twenty years . . ha ! ha ! ha ! ' and his worship, joining in the laugh, admits the story is a good one, and consents to make it an exception. So must exception be made now and then, in the case of comedies. With muscles but imperceptibly moved, we sit out half *Mrs. Inchbald's Collection* ; but at *She Stoops to Conquer*, we expand into a roar. The 'Three jolly Pigeons' itself never had greater fun going forward in it ; and though genteel critics have objected to the comedy that it contains low characters, just as *Mrs. Hardcastle* objected to the ale-house, the whole spirit of the objection seems to fade before Tony's sensible remark, when his mother wants him to desert the Pigeons and disappoint the low fellows, ' As for disappointing *them*, ' I should not so much mind ; but I can't abide to disappoint *myself*.' But in truth that objection, strongly as it has been urged, is quite untenable. *Young Marlow* belongs to as genuine 'high' comedy as any thing in Farquhar or Vanbrugh. The idea of the part, with its whimsical bashfulness, its simple mistakes, its awkward dilemmas, is a

favourite and familiar one with Goldsmith. To the same family, though marked by traits perfectly distinct, belong *Mr. Honeywood*; *Moses Primrose*; and the credulous *Chinese Citizen* who entrusts his watch to that beautiful young lady in the streets, who with so much generosity takes upon herself the trouble of getting it mended for him. There is as little of the mere farcical in *Young Marlow* as in any of these. The high comic intention is never lost in the merely ludicrous situation. In the transition from stammering modesty with *Miss Hardcastle*, to easy familiarity with the supposed barmaid, the character does not lose its identity; for the over-assumption of ease and the ridiculous want of it, are perceived to have the same origin. It is not simply one disguise flung aside for another. The constitutional timidity is kept always ludicrously prominent, but by fine and delicate touches. In like manner, *Mr. Hardcastle* and his wife have the same degree of what may be called comic dignity. The jovial old squire, with his love for every thing that's old, 'old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine,' not forgetting his own interminable old stories, is just the man to have his house mistaken for an inn; and the man to resent it too, with something festive and enjoying in the very robustness of his rage. There is altogether, let me add, an exuberant heartiness and breadth of genial humour in the comedy, which seems of right to overflow into *Tony Lumpkin*. He *may* be farcical, as such lumpish, roaring, uncouth animal-spirits have a right to be: but who would

abate a bit of *Cousin Tony*, stupid and cunning as he is, impudent yet sheepish, with his loutish love of low company, and his young-squire sense of his 'fortin'? There is never any misgiving about Goldsmith's fun and enjoyment. It is not obtained at the expense of any better thing. He does not snatch a joke out of a misery, or an ugliness, or a mortification; or any thing that, apart from the joke, would be likely to give pain: which, with all his airy wit and refinement, was too much the trick of Sheridan. Whether it be enjoyment or mischief going on in one of Goldsmith's comedies, the predominant impression is hearty, jovial, and sincere; and nobody feels the worse when *Tony*, after fearful joltings down Feather-bed-lane, over Up-and-down Hill, and across Heavy-tree Heath, lodges his mother in the horse-pond. The laugh clears the atmosphere all round it.

But Colman saw nothing of this, wonderful to say. No laughter, or too much laughter, seemed to be all one to him. He was not to be moved. He had the manuscript of the comedy in his hands for many months, and could not determine to say *yes* or *no*. Poor Goldsmith's early dream that poets were to find protection in the Covent Garden manager, had been doomed to have dire awakening. He was impelled at last to lay all his circumstances before him, describe of what vital moment to its writer the acting of this comedy had become, and make appeal from the manager's judgment to the mercy of the friend. But to even this he received a general and still evasive answer; reiterating but not speci-

fyng objections, and hinting the necessity of taking counsel with other advisers. Thus the matter stood in the middle of January 1773, when Goldsmith, with a galling sense that the best part of the season was passing, wrote with renewed earnestness to Colman.

“DEAR SIR, *I entreat* you'll relieve me from that state of suspense in which I have been kept for a long time. Whatever objections you have made or shall make to my play, I will endeavour to remove and not argue about them. To bring in any new judges either of its merit or faults I can never submit to. Upon a former occasion when my other play was before Mr. Garrick he offered to bring me before Mr. Whitehead's tribunal, but I refused the proposal with indignation: I hope I shall not experience as hard treatment from you as from him. I have, *as you know*, a large sum of money to make up shortly; by accepting my play I can readily satisfy my Creditor that way, at any rate I must look about to some certainty to be prepared. *For God's sake take the play and let us make the best of it, and let me have the same measure at least which you have given as bad plays as mine.* I am your friend and servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

In answer to this, the manuscript was at last returned with many distasteful remarks written in upon the blank leaves, though with accompanying assurance that the promise of the theatre should be kept, and the comedy acted notwithstanding; but in the vexation of Colman's criticism, though now with a dreary misgiving of as ill success at Drury Lane, Goldsmith sent his manuscript a few days later, as he had received it, to Garrick. He had hardly done so when he recalled it as hastily. With no fresh cause for distrust of Garrick, it would seem; but because



Johnson had interfered, had pointed out the disadvantage to the play in any formal withdrawal from Covent Garden, and had himself gone to talk to Colman about it. This letter to Garrick was written early in February.

“DEAR SIR, I ask many pardons for the trouble I gave you yesterday. Upon more mature deliberation, and the advice of a sensible friend, I began to think it indelicate in me to throw upon you the odium of confirming Mr. Colman’s sentence. I therefore request you will send my play back by my servant; for having been assured of having it acted at the other house, though I confess yours in every respect more to my wish, yet it would be folly in me to forego an advantage which lies in my power of appealing from Mr. Colman’s opinion to the judgment of the town. I entreat if not too late, you will keep this affair a secret for some time. I am, dear Sir, your very humble servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

Johnson described the spirit of his interview with Colman many years later, when, talking of the steep and thorny road through which his friend Goldsmith had had to make his way to fame, he reminded Reynolds that both his comedies had been once refused, ‘his first by Garrick, ‘his second by Colman, *who was prevailed on at last ‘by much solicitation, nay, a kind of force, to bring it ‘on’*. Reynolds replied with a striking illustration of the strange crotchets of judgment in such things, to the effect that Burke could see no merit in the *Beggars’ Opera*: but in behalf of the new comedy, it is certain, the three distinguished friends were in hearty agreement; and it is from one of Johnson’s letters to Boswell, on the 22nd of February, that we learn it is at last about

to be performed. ' Doctor Goldsmith has a new comedy, which is expected in the spring. No name is yet given it. ' The chief diversion arises from a stratagem by which a ' lover is made to mistake his future father-in-law's house ' for an inn. This, you see, borders upon farce. The ' dialogue is quick and gay, and the incidents are so prepared as not to seem improbable.' But though Colman had consented, it was with reservation of his original opinion. ' Doctor Goldsmith,' wrote Johnson ten days later to an American divine, afterwards a bishop, ' has a ' new comedy in rehearsal at Covent Garden, *to which the ' manager predicts ill success.* I hope he will be mistaken. ' I think it deserves a very kind reception.'

Its chances of a kind reception had received strong reinforcement not many days before. It had been some time noised about that Foote had a novelty in preparation at the Haymarket, founded on the Panton Street puppets, and the town was all on tip-toe to welcome it. ' Will your figures ' be as large as life, Mr. Foote,' asked a titled dame. ' Oh ' no, my lady,' said Foote, ' not much larger than Garrick.' The night of *The Primitive Puppet-Show*, the 15th of February, arrived; the whole length of the Haymarket was crammed with carriages; such was the impatience of the less fashionable crowd in waiting, that the doors were burst open from without; and to an audience breathless with expected merriment, Foote in due time presented himself. He had to offer them on that occasion, he said, a comedy called the *Handsome Housemaid, or Piety in*

*Pattens*; which was to illustrate how a maiden of low degree, by the *mere effects* of morality and virtue, raised herself to riches and honours. But they would not, he added, discover much wit or humour in it, because, agreeing with the most fashionable of his brother writers, that any signs of joyful satisfaction were beneath the dignity of such an assembly as he saw before him (roars of laughter interrupted him here), he had given up the sensual for the sentimental style. The *Puppet-Show* proceeded, and sentimental comedy never recovered the shock of that night. Garrick set himself at once to laugh at it, as loudly as though he never had supported it; and to that end sent Goldsmith a very humorous prologue descriptive of its unhappy fate, a tribute to the better prospects of his *unsentimental* comedy.

Not yet in the theatre itself, however, were these felt or understood. Mortification still attended Goldsmith there. The actors had taken their tone from the manager. Gentleman Smith threw up *Young Marlow*; Woodward refused *Tony Lumpkin*; and in the teeth of his own misgivings, Colman could not contest with theirs. So alarming was the defection, to some of Goldsmith's friends, that they urged the postponement of the comedy. 'No,' he said, giving to his necessity the braver look of independence, 'I'd rather my play were damned by bad players, than 'merely saved by good acting.' *Tony* was cast to Quick, the actor who had played the trifling part of the *Postboy* in his first comedy; and Shuter (still true to the cause of humour and character, which he admirably supported in



*Mr. Hardcastle*) suggested *Lewes* for *Young Marlow*. He was afterwards better known as *Lee Lewes*; to distinguish him from the exquisite light comedian whom Cumberland had just discovered at Dublin, and was writing about (in a capital critical style) to Garrick, but who subsequently made his appearance at Covent Garden. Lewes was the harlequin of the theatre; but on Shuter protesting in his vehement odd way that 'the boy could patter,' and 'use 'the gob-box as quick and smart as any of them,' Goldsmith consented to the trial; and before the second rehearsal was over, felt sure he would succeed. Famous was the company at these rehearsals. Shuter quite lost his presence of mind, and quaint talkativeness, when so many ladies appeared. Johnson attended them; Reynolds, his sister, and the whole Horneck party; Cradock, Murphy, and Colman. But not a jot of the latter's evil prediction, could all the hopeful mirth of the rest abate. He had set his face against success. He would not suffer a new scene to be painted for the play, refused to furnish even a new dress, and was careful to spread his forebodings as widely as he could. He was certainly not a false or ill-natured man; but appears unaccountably to have despaired of the comedy from the first, and to have thought it a kind of mercy to help it out of, rather than into, the world. With a manager so disposed, at almost every step taken within the theatre there was of course a stumble. Murphy volunteered an epilogue, but the lady who was not to speak it made objection to the lady who was; the author wrote an epilogue

to bring in both, and the lady first objected-to, objected in her turn; a third epilogue was then written by poor Goldsmith, to which Colman himself thought proper to object as too bad to be spoken; Cradock meanwhile sent a fourth from the country, rejected for a similar reason (though politely printed with the comedy as having 'arrived too late'); and Goldsmith finally tried his hand at a fifth, which, though permitted to be spoken, he thought 'a mawkish thing.' The history of these petty annoyances would be incredible, but that Mr. Cradock has preserved a letter in which Goldsmith describes them; and the epilogues survive in proof, collected with his poems. The letter was written immediately after the performance, but will most properly be quoted here.

"MY DEAR SIR, The play has met with a success much beyond your expectations or mine. I thank you sincerely for your epilogue, which however could not be used, but with your permission shall be printed. The story in short is this. Murphy sent me rather the outline of an epilogue than an epilogue, which was to be sung by Miss Catley, and which she approved; Mrs. Bulkley hearing this, insisted on throwing up her part" (*Miss Hardcastle*) "unless according to the custom of the theatre she were permitted to speak the epilogue. In this embarrassment I thought of making a quarrelling epilogue between Catley and her, debating *who* should speak the epilogue; but then Mrs. Catley refused after I had taken the trouble of drawing it out. I was then at a loss indeed; an epilogue was to be made, and for none but Mrs. Bulkley. I made one, and Colman thought it too bad to be spoken; I was obliged therefore to try a fourth time, and I made a very mawkish thing as you'll shortly see. Such is the history of my Stage adventures, and which I have

at last done with. I cannot help saying, that I am very sick of the stage ; and though I believe I shall get three tolerable benefits, yet I shall on the whole be a loser, even in a pecuniary light ; my ease and comfort I certainly lost while it was in agitation. I am, my dear Cradock, your obliged and obedient servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH. P. S. Present my most humble respects to Mrs. Cradock.'

This anticipates a little ; seeing that some touches to the loss of ease and comfort are yet to be added. There were but a few days left before the comedy was to be acted, and no name had been found for it. 'We are all in labour,' says Johnson, whose labour of kindness had been untiring throughout, 'for a name to Goldy's play.' What now stands as the second title, *The Mistakes of a Night*, was originally the only one ; but it was thought undignified for a comedy. *The Old House a New Inn* was suggested in place of it, but dismissed as awkward. Reynolds then announced what he thought so capital a title, that he threatened, if it were not adopted, he should go and help to damn the play ; and he triumphantly named it *The Belle's Stratagem*. This name was still under discussion, and had well nigh been snatched from Mrs. Cowley, when Goldsmith hit upon *She Stoops to Conquer*. Graver troubles remained, which he could not remedy ; and he left the last rehearsal with a heavy heart. His probable failure had been made matter of such common gossip, that it was even announced in the box-office to the servant who was engaging a box for the Duke of Gloucester ; and a very angry remonstrance with Colman followed. Up to this time he had not been able

to muster courage to begin the printing of his play; but in a kind of desperation he now went to Newbery, and, in redemption of the debt between them which had lately cost him some anxiety, offered him the chances of the copyright. 'And yet to tell you the truth' he added, 'there are great doubts of its success.' Newbery thought it best to accept the offer, by which he afterwards very largely profited.

The eventful day arrived (Monday the 15th of March), and Goldsmith's friends were summoned to a tavern dinner, arranged and to be presided over by Johnson. George Steevens was one; and in calling on his way to the tavern to take up the old zealous philosopher, found him ready dressed, 'but in coloured clothes.' There was a court mourning at the time, for the King of Sardinia; and being reminded of this, Johnson hastened with reiterated thanks to change his dress, profuse in his gratitude for being saved from an appearance so improper in the 'front row of a front box,' and protesting that he would not 'for ten pounds' have seemed 'so retrograde to any general observance.' At this dinner, beside Johnson and Steevens, Burke and his brother were present, with Sir Joshua Reynolds, Caleb Whitefoord, and (he would himself have us believe) Cumberland and a party of Scotch friends. But, for the presence of Cumberland and his friends, his own *Memoirs* (little better than an amusing collection of apocryphal things) is the only authority: and not only has he described a jumble of a party that could never have

assembled (putting in poor Fitzherbert as a guest, though he had already destroyed himself), but, in giving every body a ludicrous air of patronising superiority to Goldsmith, and declaring their only desire to have been to obtain a triumph 'not only over Colman's judgment but 'their own,' he has so unblushingly misstated the known opinions of Johnson and the rest in connection with the play, that his whole scene proclaims itself romance. It is a *Sir Fretful* good-humouredly describing the success of a brother dramatist. He says that he and his friends had little hope of success, but were perfectly determined to struggle hard for their author; that they assembled their strength at the Shakespeare Tavern (it is much more likely to have been the St. James's Coffee House), where Johnson took the chair at the head of a long table, 'and was the life 'and soul of the corps'; that though his jokes, and his raillery of Goldsmith, were the better comedy of the two, and much the most attractive, they started in good time for their duty at the theatre, taking with them a band of determined North British *claqueurs*; that they distributed themselves at separate and allotted posts, with preconcerted signals for applause, elaborately communicating each with the other; that his own station was as flapper to a simple Scotch worthy with a most contagious roar of a laugh, but with no notion how to use it, who, from laughing upon signal where he found no joke, proceeded to find a joke and a roar on his own account in almost everything said; and that though these mal-a-propos bursts of friendly



thunder gave umbrage now and then to the pit, the success of (not the comedy, but) 'our manœuvres' was complete, and the curtain fell to a triumph. Alas! while Cumberland, writing more than thirty years after the event, would have us thus believe that hardly anybody was laughing but himself and his friends, the papers of the day report to have seen him as manifestly miserable in one box, as Hugh Kelly and *Ossian* Macpherson showed themselves in another: not only when Woodward came on, in mourning, to speak Garrick's satirical prologue against the sentimentalists, but while the laughter as the comedy went on seemed to peal the death knell of their school; and particularly when one hearty shout went up for *Tony's* friend at the Jolly Pigeons, the bear-leader who never danced his bear but to the very genteelest of tunes, *Water Parted* or the *Minuet in Ariadne*. Mr. Day was present, and gives the weight of his judicial authority against Cumberland. He says that he and some friends, knowing the adverse expectations entertained of the comedy, had assembled in great force in the pit to protect it; but they found no difficulty to encounter, for it was 'received throughout with the greatest acclamations.' Indeed all the probabilities are against Cumberland's account; and only one sentence in it, confirmed by every other authority, can be pronounced unquestionable. 'All eyes were upon Johnson,' he says, 'who sat in a front row in a side box; and when he laughed, everybody thought himself warranted to roar.'

Goldsmith had not come with his friends to the theatre.

During the dinner, as Sir Joshua afterwards told Northcote, not only did he hardly speak a word, but 'was so choked that he could not swallow a mouthful;' and when the party left for the theatre, he went an opposite way. A friend found him sauntering between seven and eight o'clock in the Mall of St. James's Park (struggling to be brave, it may be, with the reflection of what an illustrious line of Ben Jonsons, Websters, Fletchers, Dekkers, Drydens, Congreves, and Fieldings, are comprised in the company of 'stage-damned'); and it was only on that friend's earnest representation of how useful his presence might be, should sudden alteration be found necessary in any scene, he was prevailed upon to go to the theatre. He entered the stage door at the opening of the fifth act, and heard a solitary hiss at the improbability of *Mrs. Hardcastle*, in her own garden, supposing herself forty miles off on Crackscull common (a trick, nevertheless, which Sheridan actually played off on Madame de Genlis). 'What's that?' he cried out, alarmed not a little at the sound. 'Psha! Doctor,' said Colman, who was standing at the side-scene, doubtless well pleased to have even so much sanction for all his original forebodings, 'don't be afraid of a squib, when we 'have been sitting these two hours on a barrel of gun-powder.' Cooke, who gives the best version of this anecdote, corrects assertions elsewhere made that it had happened at the last rehearsal; tells us Goldsmith himself had related it to him; and adds that 'he never forgave 'it to Colman to the last hour of his life.' To all the

actors his gratitude was profuse. So thankful had the *Tony Lumpkin*, in making Quick's fortune, made him, that he altered a translation of Sedley's from Bruey's comedy of *Le Grondeur*, adapted it as a farce, and suffered it to be played with his name for the benefit of Quick, before the season closed; and so pleased was he with the exertions of Lee Lewes, that on the occasion of *his* benefit (the night preceding Quick's), he wrote him an occasional epilogue, in his pleasantest vein.

The hiss seems to have been really a solitary one; for no difference is to be found in any reliable account, either public or private, as to the comedy's absolute success, or the extraordinary 'acclamations' that rang through the theatre 'when it was given out for the author's benefit.' Indeed the hiss was so notably exceptional, that one paper gives it to Cumberland, another to Kelly, and a third, in a parody on *Ossian*, to Macpherson (who had strong reason for hostility to all the Johnson 'clique'). 'Dumb the sullen  
' sat . . . till at last burst faintly a timorous hiss . . . turn  
' him out, toss him over, was the voice of the crowd . . . the  
' manager grumbled within . . . the people sat laughing  
' amain.' It became the manager's turn to be *afraid of squibs*; for never with more galling effect had they played round any poor mortal's head, than now, for some weeks to come, they rattled round that of Colman. Even Wilkes left his graver brawls to try his hand at them. The sentimentalist leaders were hit heavily on all sides; but the evil-boding manager, to use his own expression, was put upon

the rack. He ran away to Bath to escape the torture, but it followed him even there, and to Goldsmith himself he at last interceded for mercy. 'Colman is so distressed with abuse,' writes Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, 'that he has solicited Goldsmith to take him off the rack of the newspapers.' Johnson's subsequent judgment of the comedy need hardly be quoted. 'I know of no comedy for many years that has so much exhilarated an audience; that has answered so much the great end of comedy, making an audience merry.' Goldsmith was quite contented with that test. 'Did it make you laugh?' he asked Northcote, who had applauded lustily in the gallery in company with Ralph, Sir Joshua's confidential man; but was too modest to offer an opinion of his own, when asked next day. 'Exceedingly,' was the answer. 'Then that is all I require;' and the author gave him some box tickets for his first benefit night.

This night, and its two successors, are supposed to have realised between four and five hundred pounds; and the comedy ran to the end of the season, with only such interruptions as holidays and benefit nights interposed. The tenth night was by royal command, and the twelfth was the season's closing night, on the 31st of May. But Foote acted it in the summer at the Haymarket, and it was resumed in winter with the re-opening of Covent Garden. Again it had the compliment of a royal command; ran many merry nights that second season; has made thousands of honest people merry, every season since; and still

continues to add its yearly sum to the harmless stock of public pleasure. Goldsmith had printed it with all dispatch, and dedicated it to Johnson. 'In inscribing this slight performance to you,' he said, 'I do not mean so much to compliment you as myself. It may do me some honour to inform the public, that I have lived many years in intimacy with you. It may serve the interests of mankind also to inform them, that the greatest wit may be found in a character, without impairing the most unaffected piety.'

One dark shadow fell upon him in the midst of his success, and came as usual from Kenrick. Nine days after the appearance of the comedy, a personal attack by that professional libeller appeared in an evening paper called the *London Packet*. It was not more gross than former favours from the same hand had been. All his writings were denounced in it. The *Traveller* was 'flimsy,' the *Deserted Village* 'without fancy or fire,' the *Good-natur'd Man* 'water-gruel,' and *She Stoops to Conquer* 'a speaking pantomime.' Harmless abuse enough, and such as plays the shadow to all success. Swift's sign of a genius is that the dunces are in confederacy against him; and there is always a large and active class of them in literature. To the end of the chapter, the Dryden will have his Shadwell, and the Pope his Dennis; and the *signum fatale Minervæ* be a signal for the *huic date*, the old cry of attack. 'Give it him' is the sentence, if he shows signs of life in genius or learning; and the execution seldom fails. But a man who

enters literature, enters it on this condition. He has to reflect that sooner or later he will be stamped for as much as he is worth; and meanwhile has to think that probably his height, dimensions, and prowess might not be so well discerned, if less men than himself did not thus surround and waylay him at his starting. Without extenuation of the unjust assailant, so much is fairly to be said; without in the least agitating the question whether a petty larceny or a petty libel be the more immoral, or whether it be the more criminal to filch a purse or a good name. Shakespeare has decided that. But the present libel in the *London Packet* went far beyond the bounds indicated; and to which allusion has only been made that the incident now to be related may be judged correctly. Goldsmith had patiently suffered worse public abuse; and would doubtless here have suffered as patiently, if baser matter had not been introduced. But the libeller had invaded private life, and dragged in the *Jessamy Bride*. 'Would man believe 'it,' he asked, 'and will woman bear it, to be told that for 'hours, the *great* Goldsmith will stand surveying his grotesque ourang-outang figure in a pier-glass. Was but the 'lovely H——k as much enamoured, you would not sigh, 'my gentle swain, in vain.' Having read this, he felt it was his duty to resent it. Captain Horneck, the lady's brother, accompanied him to the office of the *London Packet*, but in ignorance of his precise intention.

Thomas Evans was the publisher (from a note found among his papers, Goldsmith at first seems to have thought

him the editor); and must not be confounded with the worthy bookseller of the same name, who first collected Goldsmith's writings. He was more eccentric than amiable. He let his son die in the streets because he had sided with his mother in a quarrel; and would have disinherited his heirs if they had not buried him without coffin or shroud, and limited his funeral expenses to forty shillings. His assistant at this time was a young man named Harris, whose name afterwards rivalled Newbery's in the affection of children, having succeeded to Francis Newbery's business (carried on as the firm of Carnan and Newbery) in St. Paul's Churchyard. It was of him Goldsmith and Horneck inquired whether Evans was at home; and he has described what followed. He called Evans from an adjoining room, and heard him thus addressed: 'I have called in consequence of a scurrilous attack in your paper upon me (my name is Goldsmith) and an unwarrantable liberty taken with the name of a young lady. As for myself I care little, but her name must not be sported with.' Evans, upon this, declaring ignorance of the matter, saying he would speak to the editor, and stooping as though to look for the libel, Goldsmith struck him smartly with his cane across the back. But Evans, being a strong sturdy man, returned the blow; and in the sudden scuffle a lamp suspended over-head was broken, the combatants covered with the oil, and the undignified affray brought to a somewhat ludicrous pause. Then there stepped from the adjoining editorial room, which Evans had lately quitted, no less a

person than Kenrick himself, who had certainly written the libel; and who is described to have 'separated the parties and sent Goldsmith home in a coach,' Captain Horneck standing transfixed with amazement. Evans subsequently indicted Goldsmith for the assault, but consented to a compromise on his paying fifty pounds to a Welch charity.

But this money payment was the least of the fines exacted. All the papers abused the poor sensitive poet, even such as were ordinarily favourable to him; and all of them steadily ignored the real point in issue. At last he stated it himself; in an *Address to the Public* which was published in the *Daily Advertiser* of the 31st of March, and which is well worth subjoining. The abuse at which it was aimed had at this time grown to an intolerable height. The *Mr. Snakes* whom Sheridan satirized a few years later, were spawning in abundance. 'I am not employed in the political line but in private disputes' said one of them this year to Tommy Townshend, explaining why he had preferred entering the service of the newspapers rather than that of the ministers. Attacks upon private character were the most liberal existing source of newspaper income.

'Lest it should be supposed that I have been willing to correct in others an abuse of which I have been guilty myself, I beg leave to declare, that in all my life I never wrote or dictated a single paragraph, letter, or essay in a newspaper, except a few moral essays, under the character of a Chinese, about ten years ago, in the *Ledger*, and a letter to which I signed my name, in the *St. James's Chronicle*. If the liberty of the press, therefore, has been abused, I have had no



hand in it. I have always considered the press as the protector of our freedom, as a watchful guardian, capable of uniting the weak against the encroachments of power. What concerns the public, most properly admits of a public discussion. But of late the press has turned from defending public interest, *to making inroads upon private life*; from combating the strong, to overwhelming the feeble. No condition is now too obscure for its abuse, and the protector has become the tyrant of the people. In this manner the freedom of the press is beginning to sow the seeds of its own dissolution: the great must oppose it from principle, and the weak from fear; till at last every rank of mankind shall be found to give up its benefits, content with security from insults. How to put a stop to this licentiousness, by which all are indiscriminately abused, and by which vice consequently escapes in the general censure, I am unable to tell; all I could wish is, that as the law gives us no protection against the injury, so it should give calumniators no shelter after having provoked correction. The insults which we receive before the public, by being more open are the more distressing; *by treating them with silent contempt, we do not pay a sufficient deference to the opinion of the world. By recurring to legal redress we too often expose the weakness of the law, which only serves to increase our mortification by failing to relieve us.* In short, every man should singly consider himself as a guardian of the liberty of the press, and as far as his influence can extend, should endeavour to prevent its licentiousness becoming at last the grave of its freedom. OLIVER GOLDSMITH.'

Johnson called this a foolish thing well done. Boswell had come up for his London holiday two days after it appeared, and thought it *so* well done, that (knowing Johnson to have dictated arguments in Scotch appeals and other like matters for himself) he assumed Johnson to have done it. 'Sir,' said Johnson, 'Doctor Goldsmith

' would no more have asked me to have wrote such a thing  
' as that for him, than he would have asked me to feed  
' him with a spoon, or do anything else that denoted his  
' imbecility. I as much believe that he wrote it as if I  
' had seen him do it. Sir, had he shown it to any one  
' friend, he would not have been allowed to publish it.  
' He has indeed done it very well, but it is a foolish thing  
' well done. I suppose he has been so much elated by  
' the success of his new comedy that he has thought  
' everything that concerned him must be of importance to  
' the public.' A few days later, Boswell went to his Fleet  
Street place of worship with news that he had been to see  
Goldsmith, and regret that he had fallen into a loose way  
of talking. He reported him to have said, ' As I take my  
' shoes from the shoemaker, and my coat from the tailor,  
' so I take my religion from the priest.' A silly thing to  
say, if gravely said : but not so, if used to dismiss Bozzy's  
pestering habit of intruding solemn subjects, and flourishing  
weapons of argument over them which he knew not how  
to handle. But Johnson happened to be in no humour  
to discriminate, and simply answered: ' Sir, he knows  
' nothing ; he has made up his mind about nothing.'

On the thirteenth of April the three dined alone with  
General Oglethorpe and his family, and Goldsmith showed  
them that at least he could sing. After taking prominent  
part in the after-dinner talk (expatiating on one of his  
favourite themes of the effect of luxury in degenerating  
races, and maintaining afterwards a discussion with

Johnson), he sang with great applause, on joining the ladies at tea, not only *Tony Lumpkin's* song of the 'Three Jolly Pigeons,' but a very pretty one to an Irish tune (the 'Humours of Ballamagairy') which he had written for *Miss Hardcastle*, but which Mrs. Bulkley cut out, not being able to sing. Two days later the three again met at General Paoli's; and what Boswell noted down of even Goldsmith's share in the conversation, is no unreasonable answer to his own and Johnson's multiplied charges of absurdity and ignorance. What Goldsmith says for the most part is excellent sense, very tersely and happily expressed. The exception was a hasty remark upon Sterne, to whose writings he was not yet become reconciled. Johnson had instanced 'the man Sterne' as having had engagements for three months, in proof that any body who has a name will have plenty of invitations in London. 'And a very dull fellow,' interposed Goldsmith. 'Why, no, sir,' said Johnson. He came off better in a subsequent good-humoured hit against Johnson himself, who, describing his poor-author days, and the quantities of prefaces and dedications he had written, declared that he had dedicated to the royal family all round: 'and perhaps, sir,' suggested Goldsmith, 'not one sentence of wit in a whole dedication?' 'Perhaps not, sir,' the other humanely admitted.

They fell into something like an argument, afterward, as to whether Signor Martinelli, a very fashionable and complacent teacher of Italian who had written a history of England (he was present at the dinner, or they would



hardly have spoken so respectfully of a mere compilation from Rapin), should continue his history to the present day. 'To be sure he should,' said Goldsmith. 'No, sir,' said Johnson, 'he would give great offence. He would 'have to tell of almost all the living great what they do 'not wish to be told.' To this Goldsmith replied that it might perhaps be necessary for a native to be more cautious; but a foreigner who came among us without prejudice, might be considered as holding the place of a judge, and might speak his mind freely. Johnson retorted that the foreigner was just as much in danger of catching 'the error and mistaken enthusiasm' of the people he happened to be among. 'Sir,' persisted Goldsmith, 'he wants 'only to sell his history, and to tell truth: one an honest, 'the other a laudable motive.' 'Sir,' returned Johnson, 'they are both laudable motives. It is laudable in a man to 'wish to live by his labours; but he should write so as he 'may live by them, not so as he may be knocked on the 'head. I would advise him to be at Calais before he writes 'his history of the present age.' Goldsmith's observation on this was not very logical, it must be confessed. 'There 'are people who tell a hundred political lies every day,' he said, 'and are not hurt by it. Surely, then, one may 'tell truth with safety.' 'Why, sir,' Johnson answered, 'a man had rather have a hundred lies told of him, than 'one truth which he does not wish to be told.' 'Well,' protested Goldsmith, 'for my part, I'd tell the truth, and 'shame the devil.' 'Yes, sir,' said the other; 'but the

‘devil will be angry. I wish to shame the devil as much as you do, but I should choose to be out of the reach of his claws.’ ‘His claws can do you no harm, when you have the shield of truth,’ was Goldsmith’s happy retort, which, on the whole, left the victory with him. The same spirit, but not so good an argument, was in his subsequent comment on Johnson’s depreciation of the learning of Harris of Salisbury (the first Lord Malmesbury’s father). ‘He may not be an eminent Grecian,’ he interposed, ‘but he is what is much better: he is a worthy humane man.’ ‘Nay, sir,’ said Johnson, ‘that will as much prove that he can play upon the fiddle as well as Giardini, as that he is an eminent Grecian.’ Goldsmith felt this; and turned off with a remark that ‘the greatest musical performers have small emoluments. Giardini, I am told, does not get above seven hundred a year.’ ‘That,’ replied Johnson, with a philosophy worthy of Adam Smith, ‘is indeed but little for a man to get, who does best that which so many endeavour to do.’ Then there was some talk about *She Stoops to Conquer*; and little weaknesses of Goldsmith’s peeped out.

Somebody wondered if the king would come to see the new play. ‘I wish he would,’ said Goldsmith quickly. ‘Not,’ he added, with a show of indifference meant to cover the too great earnestness, ‘that it would do me the least good.’ ‘Well then, sir,’ said Johnson laughing, ‘let us say it would do *him* good. No, sir, this affectation will not pass: it is mighty idle. In such a state as ours, who

‘ would not wish to please the chief magistrate?’ ‘ I do wish to please him,’ returned Goldsmith frankly, and eager to repair his error. ‘ I remember a line in Dryden, *And every poet is the monarch’s friend*: it ought to be reversed.’ ‘ Nay, there are finer lines in Dryden on this subject,’ said Johnson ; and, not caring for the moment to recollect that their host had been a rebel, he quoted a couplet to the effect that ‘ never rebel was to arts a friend.’ ‘ Nay,’ said Paoli, ‘ successful rebels might.’ ‘ Happy rebellions,’ explained Martinelli. ‘ We have no such phrase,’ said Goldsmith. ‘ But have you not the *thing*?’ asked Paoli. ‘ Yes,’ the other answered ; ‘ all our happy *revolutions*. They have hurt our constitution, and *will* hurt it, till we mend it by another *happy revolution*.’ Boswell adds that he never before discovered ‘ so much of the old prejudice’ in his friend Goldsmith : but the remark was more probably thrown out, at once to please old Johnson and at the same time vindicate his own independence in the matter of royalty. The turn taken by the conversation would indicate this.

‘ Il a fait,’ said Paoli of Goldsmith, ‘ un compliment très-gracieux à une certaine grande dame.’ The allusion was to a strong indication in *She Stoops to Conquer*, of its author’s dislike of the Royal Marriage Act and sympathy with its victim the Duchess of Gloucester. The Duke of Cumberland had been forbidden the Court on his marriage with a handsome widow, Mrs. Horton (Colonel Luttrell’s sister), a year before : but on the Duke of Gloucester’s

subsequent avowal of his marriage with another and more charming widow, Lady Waldegrave (Sir Edward Walpole's natural daughter), the king's indignation found vent in the Royal Marriage Act; which was hotly opposed by the Whigs as an edict of tyranny, Lord Rockingham contesting it at every stage in the Lords, and Goldsmith (perhaps for Burke's sake) helping to make it unpopular with the people. 'We'll go to France,' says *Hastings* to *Miss Neville*, 'for there, even among slaves, the laws of marriage are respected.' Said on the first night, this had directed repeated cheering and popular applause to the Duke of Gloucester, who sat in one of the boxes; and it now drew forth the allusion of Paoli. But Boswell was not content with a mere hint. Feeling that Goldsmith 'might not wish to avow positively his taking part against the Court,' and that therefore it was not fair to endeavour to bring him to a confession, he naturally resolved, upon the instant, to bring him to it if he could: so, in order to hear the exact truth from himself, he straightway doubted if the allusion had ever been intended. Goldsmith smiled and hesitated; when Paoli hastened to relieve him with an elegant metaphor. 'Monsieur Goldsmith est comme la mer, qui jette des perles et beaucoup d'autres belles choses, sans s'en appercevoir.' 'Très bien dit, et très élégamment,' said Goldsmith, highly pleased.

Five days afterward he dined at Thrale's; again argued with Johnson; and seems to me to have had the best of the argument. Talking of poor Fitzherbert's melancholy

suicide the year before, Johnson said he had often thought that after a man had taken the resolution to kill himself, it was not courage in him to do anything however desperate, because he had nothing to fear. 'I don't see that,' remarked Goldsmith, reasonably enough. 'Nay, but, my dear sir,' said Johnson, rather unreasonably, 'why should you not see what every one else sees?' 'Why,' was Goldsmith's reply, 'it is for fear of something that he has resolved to kill himself: and will not that timid disposition restrain him?' Johnson's retort was a sophism exactly confirming Goldsmith's view. The argument arose, he said, on the resolution taken, not on the inducement to take it: Determine, and you have nothing more to fear. You may go and take the king of Prussia by the nose, at the head of his army. 'You cannot fear the rack, who are resolved to kill yourself.' Goldsmith's obvious answer might have been, It is precisely because I fear the rack that I have resolved to kill myself: but there the argument ended. Garrick's vanity was another topic started at this dinner; and Johnson accounted for it, and justified it, by the many bellows that had blown the fire (and such bellows! interposed Boswell characteristically, mentioning the notes of famous people he had persuaded Garrick to show him, 'Lord Mansfield with his cheeks like to burst, Lord Chatham like an Æolus'). But he was not so tolerant of his old friend eight days later, when the same party, with Reynolds, Langton, and Thrale, dined at General Oglethorpe's. Goldsmith had said he thought it 'mean and gross flattery' in



Garrick, to have foisted into the dialogue of Beaumont and Fletcher's play of the *Chances*, which he had revived that year, a compliment to the queen; when Johnson with somewhat needless warmth remarked, 'as to meanness, sir, how is 'it mean in a player, a showman, a fellow who exhibits himself for a shilling, to flatter his queen.' In admirable taste was then the calm and just rebuke of the kindly Reynolds. 'I do not perceive why the profession of a player should be 'despised; for the great and ultimate end of all the employments of mankind is to produce amusement. Garrick 'produces more amusement than any body.' This emboldened Boswell to hazard the analogy of a lawyer with a player; whereon Johnson roughly seized him, turned the laugh against him, and covered his own retreat. 'Why, what 'does this prove, sir? only that a lawyer is worse. Boswell 'is now like Jack in the *Tale of a Tub*, who, when he is 'puzzled by an argument' (it was for no such reason, but it served Johnson's laugh to say so), 'hangs himself. He 'thinks I shall cut him down,' and here he laughed vociferously, 'but I'll let him hang.' Boswell's comfort in annoyances of this sort was to diffuse the annoyance by describing the whole scene next day to some one whom it equally affected. Garrick would in this case, of course, be the first to hear all that had passed. But Garrick's revenges on Johnson were harmless enough. At his angriest, he would only pay him off by exhibiting his ungainly fondness for his old wife, Tetty, in their earlier London days; or he might show him using the most uncouth gesticula-

tions to squeeze a lemon into a punch-bowl, looking round the company and calling out with a broad Lichfield twang 'who's for *poonsh*' ; or perhaps he would imitate his delivery of the celebrated lines of Ovid,

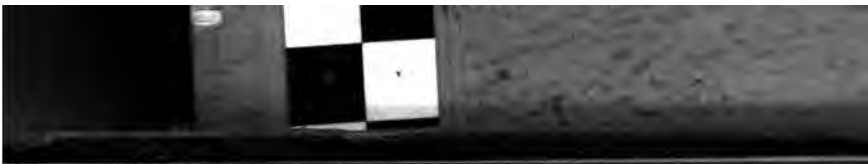
Os homini sublime dedit . . . cœlumque tueri  
Jussit . . . et erectos ad sidera . . . tollere vultus,

which he gave with pauses and half whistlings interjected, looking *downwards* all the time, and absolutely touching the ground with a kind of contorted movement of his arms while he pronounced the four last words, till all the listeners, exhausted with laughter, implored the mimic to desist.

Another subject started at Oglethorpe's table was the custom of eating dogs at Otaheite, which Goldsmith named as also existing in China, adding that a dog butcher was as common there as any other butcher, and that when he walked abroad (he quite believed this, and stated it in his *Animated Nature*) all the dogs fell on him. Johnson did not contradict it, but explained it by the 'smell of carnage.' 'Yes,' repeated Goldsmith, 'there is a general abhorrence in animals at the signs of massacre. If you put a tub full of blood into a stable, the horses are like to go mad.' 'I doubt that,' said Johnson. 'Nay, sir,' Goldsmith gravely assured him, 'it is a fact well authenticated.' 'You had better prove it,' Thrale quietly interposed, 'before you put it into your book on natural history. You may do it in my stable if you will.' But Johnson would have him do no such thing ; for the very sensible reason that

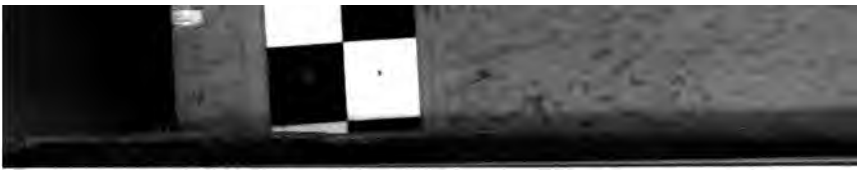
he had better leave others responsible for such errors as he might make in so comprehensive a book as his *Animated Nature*, than assume responsibility himself by the arduous task of experiment. From this the conversation passed to literary subjects, and Goldsmith spoke slightly of the character of Mallet. 'Why sir,' remarked Johnson, 'Mallet had talents enough to keep his literary reputation alive as long as he himself lived; and that, let me tell you, is a good deal.' 'But' persisted Goldsmith 'I cannot agree that it was so. His literary reputation was dead long before his natural death. I consider an author's literary reputation to be alive only while his name will insure a good price for his copy from the booksellers. I will get you' (and if the spirit of controversy was here rising in Johnson, he at once disarmed it) 'a hundred guineas for any thing whatever that you shall write, if you will put your name to it.' Johnson did not reply, but began to praise *She Stoops to Conquer*.

Poor Goldsmith's own reputation was still alive, but by this test sadly in arrear. He had several disputes with booksellers now pending, and his circumstances were verging to positive distress. The necessity of completing his *Animated Nature*, for which all the money had been received and spent, hung like a mill-stone upon him; his advances had been considerable upon other works, as yet not even begun; the money from his comedy was still coming in, but it could not, with the debts it had to satisfy, float his stranded fortunes; and he was now, in what leisure



he could get from his larger book, working at a *Grecian History*, in the hope of procuring means to meet his daily liabilities. The future was thus gradually and gloomily darkening; but, while he could, he was happy and content not to look beyond the present, cheerful or careless as it might be. He sought relief in society, and went more than ever to the Club. The change he had advocated was now made in the latter; the circle of its members was enlarged to twenty; and he took renewed interest in its meetings. A sort of understanding had been entered into that the limit of attendances to secure continued membership, should be at least twice in five weeks; and that more frequent attendance would be expected from all. The election of Garrick was proposed to fill the first vacancy. This had been zealously seconded by Goldsmith; and three nights before *She Stoops to Conquer* came out, Garrick made his first appearance in Gerrard Street. On Beauclerc's proposition the same night they elected his friend and fellow-traveller Lord Charlemont, the Irish peer whose subsequent patriotism made the title so illustrious. Burke then proposed a friend of Lord Charlemont's and his own, Mr. Agmondesham Vesey; introducing his name with the remark that he was a man of gentle manners. 'Sir,' interrupted Johnson, 'you need say no more. When you 'have said a man of gentle manners, you have said enough.' (Nevertheless, when Vesey, with schoolboy gentleness of talk, introduced one day at the Club the subject of Catiline's conspiracy, Johnson withdrew his attention and

thought about Tom Thumb). Not many days after Vesey's election, Mr. William Jones, a young lawyer and accomplished scholar of the Temple, who had distinguished himself at University College with Chambers and Scott, and had this year made pleasing addition to the select store of Eastern literature, was proposed by Chambers and elected. A fifth candidate was now in agitation; proposed on the 23rd of April (when Goldsmith occupied the chair) by Johnson, and strenuously seconded by Beauclerc. This was no other than Boswell; and not a little surprised were the majority of the members to hear the name. They did not think that Johnson's love of flattery, or Beauclerc's love of a joke, would have carried either so far. But Johnson was resolute, and had but one answer to all who objected. 'If they had refused, sir,' he said afterwards to Boswell, 'they knew they'd never have got in another. I'd have kept them all out.' Burke had not yet seen the busy, consequential, officious young Scotchman, who had so effectually tacked himself on to Johnson: but what he had heard, induced him to express a doubt if he was 'fit' for Gerrard Street; and the doubt was not likely to be removed by Boswell's own efforts to secure his election. He recommended himself to the various members he tells us, 'as in a canvass for an election into parliament.' He well deserved the seat nevertheless. Johnson invented the right word to express his merit, when he called him a 'clubable' man. Burke afterwards admitted that though he and several of the members had



wished to keep him out, none of them were sorry when he had got in. Boswell was eminently social. Society indeed was his idol, to which he made sacrifice of everything. He had all kinds of brisk and lively ways, good humour, and perpetual cheerfulness. He was to Reynolds the harbinger of festivity. He was Lord Stowell's realization of a good-natured jolly fellow. The frost of our English reserve melted at his approach. Malone knew his weaknesses, and always 'made battle' against his account of Goldsmith as a folly and a mistake (so, I may add, and in positive terms, did Reynolds, Burke, Lord Charlemont, Percy, and even George Steevens); but he also knew his strength. His eye glistened, says that unimpassioned observer, and his countenance brightened up, 'when he 'saw the human face divine.' The drawback from all this, in social life, was his incontinence of tongue; which had made his name a bye-word for eavesdropper, talebearer, and babbling spy. He had in this respect but one fault, as Goldsmith said of Hickey, but that one was a thumper. Even this fault, however, served for protection against his failings in other respects. He blabbed them all, as he blabbed everything else; and his friends had ample notice to act on the defensive. He told Johnson one day that he was occasionally troubled with fits of stinginess. 'Why, sir, 'so am I,' returned Johnson, '*but I do not tell it;*' and, mindful of the warning, he took care the next time he borrowed sixpence, to guard himself against being dunned for it. 'Boswell,' he said, '*lend me sixpence . . . not to be repaid.*'

The day fixed for Boswell's ballot was Friday the 30th of April, when Beauclerc invited him to dinner, at his new house in the Adelphi; and among the members of the Club assembled as though to

secure his election, were

Johnson, Reynolds, Lord

Charlemont, Vesey,

and Langton.

Goldsmith was

not present;

but he was the

after - dinner

subject

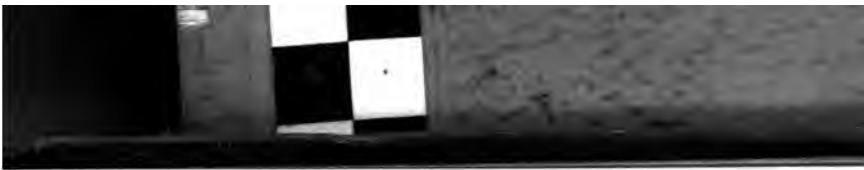




of conversation. They did not sit long, however; but went off in a body to the Club, leaving Boswell at Beauclerc's till the fate of his election should be announced to him. He sat in a state of anxiety, he tells us, which even the charming conversation of Lady Di Beauclerc could not entirely dissipate; but in a short time received the welcome tidings of his election, hastened to Gerrard Street, 'and was introduced 'to such a society as can seldom be found.' He now for the first time saw Burke: and at the same supper-table, sat Johnson, Garrick, and Goldsmith; Mr. Jones and Doctor Nugent; Reynolds, Lord Charlemont, Langton, Chamier, Vesey, and Beauclerc. As he entered, Johnson rose with gravity to acquit himself of a pledge to his fellow members; and leaning on his chair as on a desk or pulpit, gave Bozzy a *charge* with humorous formality, pointing out the conduct expected from him as a good member of the Club. A warning not to blab or tattle doubtless formed part of it, and the injunction was on the whole not unfaithfully obeyed. We owe to Langton, not to Boswell, the report of a capital bit of Johnson's criticism on this particular evening; when, Goldsmith having produced a printed *Ode* which he had been hearing read by its author in a public room (at the rate of five shillings each for admission!), Johnson thus disposed of it: 'Bolder words and more timorous meaning, 'I think, never were brought together.' Only once, does any of the Club conversation appear to have been carried away, in detail, by Boswell; and a portion of that report conveys so agreeably the unaffected social character of the Gerrard



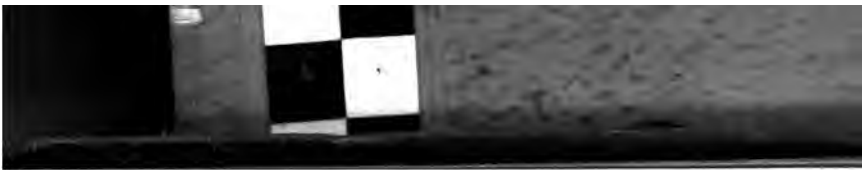
Street meetings, that it may here fitly close such attempts as I have made to convey a picture of this celebrated Club. After ranging through every variety of subject; art, politics, place hunting, debating, languages, literature, public and private virtue (it was the night when Burke announced his famous judgment, that from all the large experience he had had, he had learnt to think *better* of mankind), the conversation concluded thus. 'I understand,' said Burke, 'the hogshead of claret, which this society was favoured with by our friend the dean' (Barnard), 'is nearly out; I think he should be written to, to send another of the same kind. Let the request be made with a happy ambiguity of expression, so that we may have the chance of his sending it also as a present.' 'I am willing,' observed Johnson, 'to offer my services as secretary on this occasion.' 'As many as are for Doctor Johnson being secretary,' cried another member, 'hold up your hands. Carried unanimously.' 'He will be our dictator,' said Boswell. 'No,' returned Johnson, 'the company is to dictate to me. I am only to write for wine; and I am quite disinterested, as I drink none: I shall not be suspected of having forged the application. I am no more than humble *scribe*.' 'Then,' interposed Burke, an inveterate punster, 'you shall *prescribe*.' 'Very well,' cried Boswell; 'the first play of words to-day.' 'No, no,' interrupted Reynolds, recalling a previous bad pun of Burke's, 'the *bulls* in Ireland.' 'Were I your dictator,' resumed Johnson, 'you should have no wine. It would



‘ be my business *cavere ne quid detrimenti Respublica caperet*, and wine is dangerous. Rome,’ he added smiling, ‘ was ruined by luxury.’ ‘ Then,’ protested Burke, ‘ if you ‘ allow no wine as dictator, you shall not have me for your ‘ master of the horse.’ The Club lives again very pleasantly, in this good-humoured friendly talk.

Six days after Boswell’s election, he was with Johnson, Goldsmith, and Langton, among the guests at the dinner table of booksellers Dilly in the Poultry. They were dissenters; and had asked two ministers of their own persuasion, Doctor Mayo and Mr. Toplady, to meet their distinguished guests. The conversation first turned upon natural history, and Goldsmith contributed to it some curious facts about swallows’ partial migrations, and the nidification of birds, which last he characterised as one of the most curious and least known things in natural history. But this easy flow of instructive gossip did not satisfy Boswell. He saw a great opportunity, with two dissenting parsons present, of making Johnson ‘ rear ’; and so straightway ‘ introduced the subject of toleration.’ Johnson and the dissenters disagreed of course; and when they put to him, as a consequence of his argument, that the persecution of the first Christians must be held to have been perfectly right, he frankly declared himself ignorant of any better way of ascertaining the truth, than by persecution on the one hand and endurance on the other. ‘ But how is a man to act, ‘ sir,’ asked Goldsmith at this point. ‘ Though firmly ‘ convinced of the truth of his doctrine, may he not

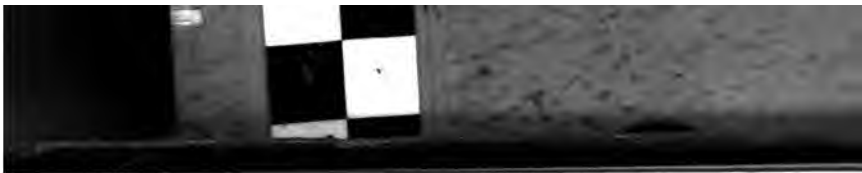
‘ think it wrong to expose himself to persecution ? Has he  
‘ a right to do so ? Is it not, as it were, committing volun-  
‘ tary suicide ?’ Johnson evaded the question by asserting  
that a man had better not expose himself to martyrdom  
who had any doubt about it. ‘ He must be convinced that he  
‘ has a delegation from Heaven.’ ‘ Nay,’ repeated Gold-  
smith, apparently unconscious that he was pressing dis-  
agreeably on Johnson, ‘ I would consider whether there is  
‘ the greater chance of good or evil upon the whole. If I  
‘ see a man who has fallen into a well, I would wish to help  
‘ him out ; but if there is a greater probability that he shall  
‘ pull me in, than that I shall pull him out, I would not  
‘ attempt it. So, were I to go to Turkey, I might wish to  
‘ convert the grand signior to the Christian faith ; but when  
‘ I considered that I should probably be put to death with-  
‘ out effectuating my purpose in any degree, I should keep  
‘ myself quiet.’ To this Johnson replied by enlarging on  
perfect and imperfect obligations, and by repeating that a  
man, to be a martyr, must be persuaded of a delegation from  
Heaven. ‘ But how,’ persisted Goldsmith, ‘ is this to be  
‘ known ? Our first reformers, who were burnt for not  
‘ believing bread and wine to be Christ.’ . . ‘ Sir,’ said  
Johnson, loudly, and careless what he said to interrupt him,  
‘ they were *not* burnt for not believing bread and wine to  
‘ be Christ, but for insulting those who did.’ What with his  
dislike of reforming protestants and his impatience of con-  
tradiction, he had now become excited to keep the field he  
had so recklessly seized, and in such manner that none should



dispossess him. Boswell describes Goldsmith during the argument, sitting in restless agitation from a wish to get in and 'shine' (no unnatural wish after the unfair way in which he had been ousted): finding himself still excluded, however, he had taken his hat to go away; but remained with it for some time in his hand, like a gamester at the close of a long night, still lingering for a favourable opening to finish with success. Once he began to speak; and found himself overpowered by the loud voice of Johnson, who was at the opposite end of the table and did not perceive his attempt. 'Thus disappointed of his wish to obtain the attention of 'the company,' says Boswell, 'Goldsmith in a passion 'threw down his hat, looking angrily at Johnson, and 'exclaiming in a bitter tone *Take it.*' At this moment, Toplady being about to speak, and Johnson uttering some sound which led Goldsmith to think he was beginning again and taking the words from Toplady, 'Sir,' he exclaimed (venting his own envy and spleen, according to Boswell, under the pretext of supporting another person), 'the gentleman has heard you patiently for an hour; pray 'allow us now to hear him.' 'Sir,' replied Johnson sternly, 'I was not interrupting the gentleman. I was 'only giving him a signal of my attention. Sir, you are 'impertinent.' Goldsmith made no reply, but continued in the company for some time. He then left for the Club.

But it is very possible he had to call at Covent Garden on his way, and that for this, and not Boswell's reason, he had taken his hat early. The actor who so served him

in *Young Marlow*, Lee Lewes, was taking his benefit this seventh of May; and, for an additional attraction, Goldsmith had written him the 'occasional' epilogue I formerly mentioned, which Lewes spoke in the character of Harlequin, and which was repeated (for the interest then awakened by the writer's recent death) at his benefit in the following year. But if he called at the theatre, his stay was brief; for when Johnson, Langton, and Boswell appeared in Gerrard Street, they found him sitting with Burke, Garrick, and other members, 'silently brooding' (says Boswell) 'over Johnson's reprimand to him after 'dinner.' Johnson saw how matters stood, and saying aside to Langton 'I'll make Goldsmith forgive me,' called to him in a loud voice, 'Doctor Goldsmith! Something 'passed to day where you and I dined: I ask your pardon.' To which Goldsmith at once 'placidly' answered, 'It must 'be much from you, sir, that I take ill.' And so at once, Boswell adds, the difference was over, and they were on as easy terms as ever, and Goldy rattled away as usual. The whole story is to Goldsmith's honour. Not so did the reverend Percy or the reverend Warton show Christian temper, when the one was called insolent and the other uncivil; not so could the courtly-bred Beauclerc or the country-bred Doctor Taylor restrain themselves, when Johnson roared *them* down; not so the gentle Langton and unruffled Reynolds, when even they were called intemperate; not so the historic Robertson, though comparing such rebukes of the righteous to excellent oil which breaks not



the head, nor the philosophic Burke, drily correcting the historian with a suggestion of 'oil of vitriol': not so, with one single submissive exception, any one of the constant victims to that forcible spirit and impetuosity of manner, which, as the submissive victim admits, spared neither sex nor age.

But Boswell was not content that the scene should have passed as it did. Two days after, he called to take leave of Goldsmith before returning to Scotland; seems to have chafed, with his meddling loquacity, what remained of a natural soreness of feeling; and dwells with great unction, in his book, on the 'jealousy and envy' which broke out at the interview. Enlarging on his having secured Johnson for a visit to the Hebrides in the autumn (an achievement which elsewhere he compared to that of a dog who had got hold of a large piece of meat, and run away with it to a corner where he might devour it in peace, without any fear of others taking it from him), Goldsmith interrupted him with the impatient remark that 'he would be a dead weight for me to carry, and that I should never be able to lug him along through the Highlands and Hebrides.' Nor, Boswell continues, was he patiently allowed to enlarge upon Johnson's wonderful abilities; for here Goldsmith broke in with that exclamation 'Is he like Burke, who winds into a subject like a serpent,' which drew forth the triumphant answer 'But Johnson is the Hercules who strangled serpents in his cradle,' seldom equalled for its ludicrous inaptness by even Bozzy himself. All which

would be amusing enough, if it had rested there; but straight from the Temple, Boswell took himself to Fleet Street, and with repetition of what had passed (his common habit) no doubt revived Johnson's bitterness. For this had not wholly subsided even a week or two later, when, on Mrs. Thrale alluding to his future biographer, he asked, 'And who will be my biographer, do you think?' 'Goldsmith, no doubt,' replied Mrs. Thrale; 'and he will do it the best among us.' 'The dog would write it best, to be sure,' was Johnson's half-jesting half-bitter rejoinder, 'but his particular malice towards me, and general disregard of truth, would make the book useless to all and injurious to my character.' Uttered carelessly enough, no doubt, and with small thought that his gay little mistress would turn authoress, and put it in a book! Let such things be taken always with the wise comment which Johnson himself supplied to them, in an invaluable remark of his ten years later. 'I am not an uncandid nor am I a severe man. *I sometimes say more than I mean, in jest; and people are apt to believe me serious.* However, I am more candid than I was when I was younger. As I know more of mankind, I expect less of them; and am ready now to call a man *a good man* upon easier terms than I was formerly.' He loved Goldsmith when he so spoke of him, and had no doubt of Goldsmith's affection: but he spoke with momentary bitterness; of the 'something after death,' whether a biography or matter more serious, he never spoke patiently; and



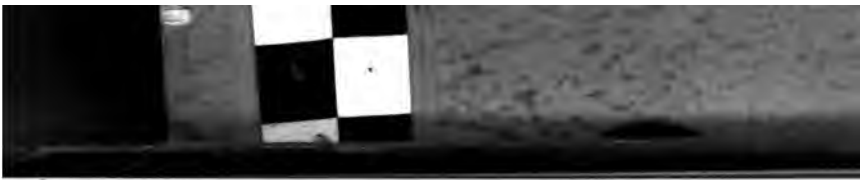
no man's quarrels, at all times, were so much lovers' quarrels. 'Sir,' he said to Boswell, with a faltering voice, when Beauclerc was in his last illness, 'I would walk to 'the extremity of the diameter of the earth to save Beauclerc:' yet with no one more bitterly than with Beauclerc, did he altercation in moments of difference. Nor was his fervent tribute 'The earth, sir, does not bear a worthier 'man than Bennet Langton,' less sincere, because one of his most favourite topics of talk to Boswell was the little weaknesses of their worthy friend.

The first volume of the *Grecian History* seems to have been finished soon after Boswell left London, and Griffin, on behalf of the 'trade,' was then induced to make further advances. An agreement dated on the 22nd of June, states £250 as the sum agreed and paid for the two volumes; but from this payment had doubtless been deducted some part of the heavy debt, for which the author was already in arrear. The rest of that debt, it seemed hopeless to satisfy by mere drudgery of his own, never more than doubtfully rewarded at best; and the idea now occurred to him of a work he might edit, for which he might procure contributions from his friends, and in which the mere influence of his name and repute might suffice to bring a liberal return. It is pleasant to find Garrick helping him in this. 'Dear sir,' writes Goldsmith to him on the 10th of June, 'To be thought of by 'you, obliges me; to be served by you, still more. It makes 'me very happy to find that Dr. Burney thinks my scheme 'of a *Dictionary* useful; still more that he will be so kind



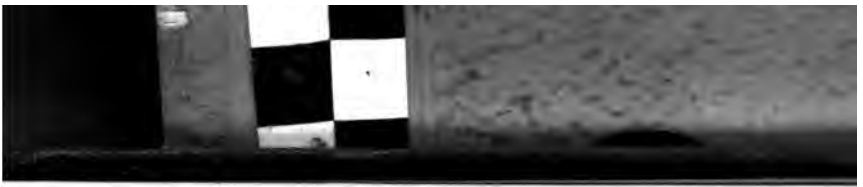
‘as to adorn it with anything of his own. I beg you will also accept my gratitude for procuring me so valuable an acquisition. I am, dear sir, Your most affectionate servant, **OLIVER GOLDSMITH.**’ Garrick had induced Doctor Burney to promise a paper on Music for the scheme, which was that of a *Popular Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*.

In exertions with a view to this project, and in other persevering labours of the desk, the autumn came on. ‘Here,’ he said exultingly to Cradock, on the latter entering his chambers one morning, ‘are some of my best prose writings. I have been hard at work ever since midnight, and I desire you to examine them. They are intended for an introduction to a body of arts and sciences.’ Cradock thought them excellent indeed, but for other admiration they have unluckily not survived. With these proofs of application, anecdotes of carelessness as usual alternate; and Cradock relates that, on one occasion, he and Percy met by appointment in the Temple, at Goldsmith’s earnest request, and found him gone away to Windsor, after leaving an earnest entreaty (with which they complied) that they would complete for him a half-finished proof of his *Animated Nature*, which lay upon his desk. His once trim chambers had then fallen into grievous disorder. Expensive volumes (which, as he says in his preface to the book just named, had sorely taxed his scanty resources) lay scattered about the tables, and tossing on the floor. But of books he had never been careful. Hawkins relates that when engaged in his historical researches about music, Gold-



smith told him some curious things one night at the Club, which he asked him to reduce to writing: he promised he would; desired Hawkins to call at his chambers; and on the latter doing so, stepped into a closet and tore out of a printed book six leaves, containing the facts he had mentioned. The carelessness, however, was not of books only. Such money as he had, might be seen lying exposed in drawers; to which his 'occasional man-servant' would resort as a mere matter of course, for means to pay any small bill that happened to be applied for: and on a visitor once pointing out the danger of this, 'What, my dear 'friend,' exclaimed Goldsmith, 'do you take Dennis for a 'thief?' One 'John Eyles' had lately replaced Dennis; and was inheritor of the too tempting confidence reposed in his predecessor, at the time of Percy's good-natured visit to the Temple. The latter incident, I may add, shows us how fleeting the *Rowley* dispute had been; and it was followed by a mark of renewed confidence from Goldsmith, which may also show the fitful despondency with which he was at this time struggling. He asked Percy to be his biographer; told him he should leave him his papers; dictated several incidents of his life to him; and gave him a number of letters and manuscript materials, which were not afterwards so carefully preserved as they might have been. There is no doubt that his spirits were now unusually depressed and uncertain, and that his health had become visibly impaired. Even his temper failed him with his servants; and uncustomary bursts of passion showed

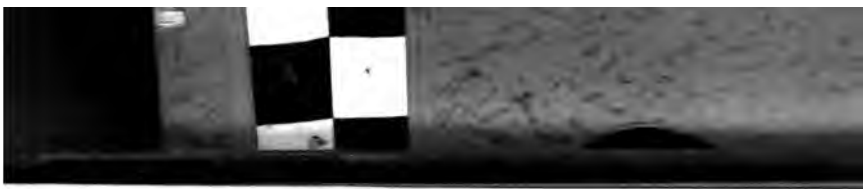
the disorder of his mind. These again he would repent and atone for on the instant; so that his laundress (one Mary Ginger) used to contend with John Eyles which of them on such occasions should first fall in his way, knowing well the profitable kindness that would follow the intemperate reproof. From such as now visited him, even men he had formerly most distrusted, he made little concealment of his affairs. 'I remember his showing me his *Animated Nature* in the Temple,' says Cumberland, who had called upon him there, 'but it was with a sigh, such as genius draws, when hard necessity diverts it from its bent to drudge for bread, and to talk of birds and beasts and creeping things, which Pidcock's showmen would have done as well.' Cumberland had no such necessity. His was not the life of the author militant. He could eat his daily bread without performing some daily task to procure it. 'I am writing for money,' said Goldsmith sorrowfully; 'while you write for fame.' His own distress, too, had made even more acute his sensibility to the distress of others. He was playing whist one evening at Sir William Chambers', when, at a critical point of the game, he flung down his cards, ran hastily from the room into the street, as hastily returned, resumed his cards, and went on with the game. He had heard an unfortunate woman attempting to sing in the street; and so did her half-singing, half-sobbing, pierce his heart, that he could not rest till he had relieved her, and sent her away. The other card-players had been



conscious of the woman's voice, but not of the wretchedness in its tone which had so affected Goldsmith.

It occurred to some friends to agitate the question of a pension for him. Wedderburne had talked somewhat largely, in his recent defence of Johnson's pension, of the resolve of the ministry no longer to restrict the bounty of the crown by political considerations, provided there was 'distinction in the literary world, and the prospect of 'approaching distress.' No living writer now answered those conditions better than Goldsmith; yet application on his behalf was met by firm refusal. His talent was not a marketable one. 'A late nobleman who had been a member 'of several administrations,' says poor Smollett, 'observed 'to me that one good writer was of more importance to 'the government than twenty placemen in the house of 'commons:.' but the good writer must have the qualities of the placeman, to enable them to recognize his importance, or induce him to accept their livery. They had lately managed to pension Arthur Murphy, and Hugh Kelly had been some years in their pay: but Goldsmith had declined the overtures which these men accepted; such political feeling as he had shown in his *English History* was decidedly anti-aristocratic; and though, with this, he may have exhibited a strong leaning to the monarchy, he had not the merit which with the king was still a substitute for most other merit, of being a Scotchman. While the matter was in discussion, there had come to London the Scotch professor who had written the somewhat trumpery *Essay*

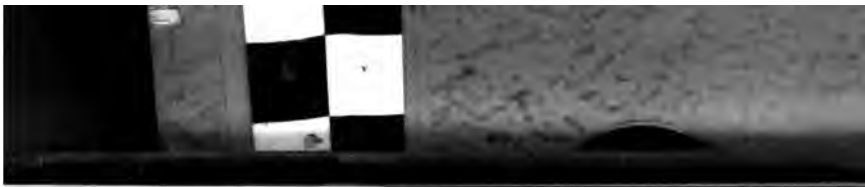
on *Truth* to which I formerly adverted; and which had eagerly been caught at with avowed exaggeration of praise, as a mere battery of assault against the Voltaire and Hume philosophy. The object, such as it was, was a good one; and though it could not make Beattie a tolerable philosopher, it made him, for the time, a very perfect social idol. He was supposed to have 'avenged' insulted Christianity. 'He is so caressed, and invited, and treated, and liked, 'and flattered by the great, that I can see nothing of him,' says Johnson. 'Every one,' says Mrs. Piozzi, 'loves 'Doctor Beattie but Goldsmith, who says he cannot bear 'the sight of so much applause as they all bestow upon 'him. Did he not tell us so himself, who could believe 'he was so exceedingly ill-natured?' Telling it, one half called him ill-natured; and the other half, absurd. He certainly had the objection all to himself. 'I have been 'but once to the Club since you left England,' writes Beauclerc to Lord Charlemont: 'we were entertained as 'usual by Doctor Goldsmith's absurdity.' Some harangue against Beattie, very probably; for even the sarcastic Beau went with the rest of the 'ale-house in Gerrard Street,' in support of the anti-infidel philosopher. What most vexed Goldsmith, however, was the adhesion of Reynolds. It was the only grave difference that had ever been between them; and it is honourable to the poet that it should have arisen on the only incident in the painter's life which has somewhat tarnished his fame. Reynolds accompanied Beattie to Oxford; partook with him in an



honorary doctorship of civil law; and on his return painted his fellow doctor in Oxonian robes, with the *Essay on Truth* under his arm, and at his side the angel of Truth overpowering and chasing away the demons of Infidelity, Sophistry, and Falsehood: the last represented by the plump and broad-backed figure of Hume, the first by the lean and piercing face of Voltaire. 'It is unworthy of 'you,' said Goldsmith to Sir Joshua, and his fine rebuke will outlast the silly picture, 'to debase so high a genius 'as Voltaire before so mean a writer as Beattie. Beattie 'and his book will be forgotten in ten years, while Voltaire's 'fame will last for ever. Take care it does not perpetuate 'this picture, to the shame of such a man as you.' Reynolds persisted, notwithstanding the protest; but was incapable of any poor resentment of it. He produced the same year, at Goldsmith's suggestion, his painting of *Ugolino*. Beattie himself, however, was full of resentment. He called his critic a poor creature, eaten up with jealousy; yet he admired his genius, he said (this was a year hence, when he had no more to fear from his criticism); and was 'sorry 'to find last summer that he looked upon me as a person 'who seemed to stand *between him and his interest*.' The allusion was to the pension; for which it was well known that Goldsmith was an unsuccessful solicitor, and which had been granted unsolicited to Beattie. The king had sent for him, praised his *Essay*, and given him two hundred a-year. Johnson welcomed the news in the Hebrides with his most vehement expression of delight, *Oh, brave we!* Though,

seeing he had quoted his favourite *Traveller* but three days before, till the 'tear started to his eye,' he might have thought somewhat of his other unpensioned friend, and 'clapped his hands' less vehemently.

That the failure of hope in this direction should a little have soured and changed the unlucky petitioner, will hardly provoke surprise. He had hitherto taken little interest, and no part in politics; and his inclination, as far as it may be traced, had certainly never been to the ministerial side. But he seems no longer to have scrupled to avow a decisive present sympathy with the opposition. Lord Shelburne's member and protégé, Townshend, was at this time Lord Mayor of London; and by his fiery liberalism, and really bold resolution, quite careless of those *Malagrida* taunts against his patron with which the sarcasm of *Junius* had supplied ministerial assailants, was exasperating the Court to the last degree. Yet Goldsmith did not hesitate to praise the 'patriotic magistrate,' and to avow that he had done so. 'Goldsmith the other day,' writes Beauclerc to Lord Charlemont, 'put a paragraph 'into the newspapers, in praise of Lord Mayor Townshend. 'The same night we happened to sit next to Lord Shelburne, 'at Drury Lane. I mentioned the circumstance of the 'paragraph to him, and he said to Goldsmith that he hoped 'he had mentioned nothing about *Malagrida* in it. "Do "you know," answered Goldsmith, "that I never could "conceive the reason why they call you *Malagrida*, for " *Malagrida* was a very good sort of man." You see

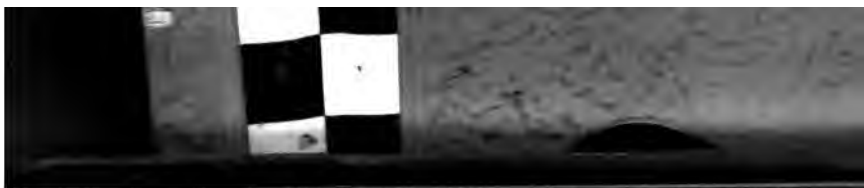


‘plainly what he meant to say; but that happy turn of expression is peculiar to himself. Mr. Walpole says that ‘this story is a picture of Goldsmith’s whole life.’ Ah! so it might seem to men whose whole life had been a holiday. No slavish drudgery, no clownish straits, no scholarly loneliness, had befallen them; and how to make allowance in others for disadvantages never felt by ourselves, is still the great problem for us all. Poor Goldsmith’s blunder was only a false emphasis. He meant that he wondered *Malagrida*, being the name of a good man, should be used as a term of reproach. But his whole life was a false emphasis, says Walpole. In his sense, perhaps it was so. He had been emphatic throughout it, where Walpole had only been indifferent; and what to the wit and man of fashion had been a scene for laughter, to the poet and man of letters had been fraught with serious suffering. ‘Life is a comedy to those who think, and a tragedy to those who feel.’ Democritus laughed, and Heraclitus wept.

Beauclerc told Lord Charlemont in the same letter, that Goldsmith had written a prologue for Mrs. Yates, which she was to speak that night at the Opera-house. ‘It is very good. You will see it soon in all the newspapers, otherwise I would send it to you.’ The newspapers have nevertheless been searched in vain for it, though it certainly was spoken; and it seems probable that Colman’s friends had interfered to suppress it. Mrs. Yates had quarrelled with the Covent Garden manager; and one object of the ‘poetical exordium’ which Goldsmith had written for her,



was to put before that fashionable audience the injustice of her exclusion from the English theatre. He had great sympathy for Mrs. Yates, thinking her the first English actress; and it is not wonderful that he should have lost all sympathy with Colman. Their breach had lately widened more and more. Kenrick, driven from Drury Lane, had found refuge at the other house; and on the very night of Mrs. Yates's prologue, Colman suffered a new comedy, by that libeller of all his friends, to be decisively damned at Covent Garden. If Goldsmith could have withdrawn both his comedies upon this, he would probably have done it; for at once he made an effort to remove the first to Drury Lane, which he had now the right to do. But Garrick insisted on his original objection to *Lofty*; and justified it by reference to the comparative coldness with which the comedy had been received in the summer, though with the zealous Lee Lewes in that part (Lewis had not yet assumed it). He would play the *Good Natur'd Man* if that objection could be obviated, not otherwise. Here the matter rested for a time. But in the course of what passed, Goldsmith found that Newbery had failed to observe his promise in connection with the unpaid bill still in Garrick's hands. This was hardly generous; since the copyright of *She Stoops to Conquer* had passed in satisfaction of all claims between them, and already promised Newbery the ample profits which it subsequently realised beyond his debt. These are said to have amounted to upwards of three hundred pounds; and the play was still so profitable after several years' sale,



that when the booksellers engaged Johnson for their first scheme of an *Edition* and *Memoir*, the project was defeated by a dispute about the value of the copyright of *She Stoops to Conquer*.

The other larger debt to 'the trade,' which had suggested to Goldsmith his project of a *Dictionary*, he had now no means of discharging but by hard, drudging, unassisted labour. His so favourite project, though he had now obtained promises of co-operation from Johnson, Burke, and Reynolds, had been finally rejected. Davies, who represented the craft on the occasion, whose own business had not been very prosperous, and many of whose copyrights had already passed to Cadell, gives us the reason of their adverse decision. He says that though they had the best opinion of the Doctor's abilities, yet they were startled at the bulk, importance, and expense of so great an undertaking, the fate of which was to depend upon the industry of a man with whose indolence of temper and method of procrastination they had long been acquainted. He adds, in further justification of the refusal, that upon every emergency half-a-dozen projects would present themselves to Goldsmith's mind, which, straightway communicated to the men they were to enrich, at once obtained him money on the mere faith of his great reputation : but the money was generally spent long before the new work was half finished, perhaps before it was begun ; and hence arose continual expostulation and reproach on the one side, and much anger and vehemence on the other. Johnson described the same trans-

actions, after all were over, in one of his emphatic sentences. 'He had raised money and squandered it, by every artifice of acquisition and folly of expense. But let not his frailties be remembered: he was a very great man.'

Hopeless of the scheme on which he had built so much, the alteration of his first comedy for Garrick, even upon Garrick's own conditions, would now seem to have suddenly presented itself as one of these 'artifices of acquisition.' He wrote to the manager of Drury Lane. The letter has by chance survived, is obligingly communicated to me by its present possessor (Mr. Bullock of Islington), and of the scanty collection so preserved is probably the worst composed and the worst written. As well in the manner as the matter of it, the writer's distress is very painfully visible. It has every appearance, even to the wafer hastily thrust into it, of having been the sudden suggestion of necessity; it is addressed, without date of time or place, to the Adelphi (where Garrick had lately purchased the centre house of the newly built terrace); nor is it unlikely to have been delivered there by the messenger of a sponging-house. A fac-simile of its signature, which may be compared with Goldsmith's ordinary hand-writing in a previous page, will shew the writer's agitation, and perhaps account for the vague distraction of his grammar.

MY DEAR SIR, Your saying you would play my *Good-natured Man* makes me wish it. The money you advanced me upon Newbery's note I have the mortification to find is not yet paid, but he says he will in two or three days. What I mean by this letter is to

lend me sixty pound for which I will give you Newbery's note, so that the whole of my debt will be an hundred for which you shall have Newbery's note as a security. This may be paid either from my alteration if my benefit should come to so much, but at any rate I will take care you shall not be a loser. I will give you a new character in my comedy and knock out *Lofty* which does not do, and will make such other alterations as you direct.

I am yours  
Oliver Goldsmith.  
I beg an answer.

The letter is indorsed in Garrick's handwriting as '*Goldsmith's parlaver.*' But though it would thus appear to have inspired little sympathy or confidence, and the sacrifice of *Lofty* had come too late and been too reluctant, Garrick's answer, begged so earnestly, was not unfavourable. He evaded the altered comedy; spoke of the new one already mentioned between them; and offered the money required on Goldsmith's own acceptance. The small security of one of Newbery's notes (though the publisher, with his experience of the comedy in hand, would doubtless gladly have taken his chance of the renovated comedy), he had some time proved. Poor Goldsmith was enthusiastic in acknowledgment. Nor let it be thought he is acting unfairly to Newbery, in the advice he sends with his thanks. The

publisher had frankly accepted the chances of a certain copyright, and had no right to wait the issue of those chances before he assumed the liability they imposed.

“MY DEAR FRIEND, I thank you! I wish I could do something to serve you. I shall have a comedy for you in a season or two at farthest that I believe will be worth your acceptance, for I fancy I will make it a fine thing. You shall have the refusal. I wish you would not take up Newbery’s note but let Waller tease him, without however coming to extremities; let him haggle after him and he will get it. I will draw upon you one month after date for sixty pound and your acceptance will be ready money, part of which I want to go down to Barton with. May God preserve my honest little man, for he has my heart. EVER, OLIVER GOLDSMITH.”

Barton was a gleam of sunshine in his darkest days. There, if no where else, he could still strive to be, as in his younger time, ‘well when he was not ill, and pleased when he was not angry.’ It was the precious maxim of Reynolds, as it had been the selectest wisdom of Sir William Temple. Reynolds himself, too, their temporary disagreement forgotten, gave him much of his society on his return: seeing, as he said afterward, the change in his manner; how greatly he then seemed to need the escape from his own thoughts; and with what a look of distress he would suddenly start from the midst of social scenes he continued still passionately fond of, to go home and brood over his misfortunes. The last gay picture in Goldsmith’s life is of himself and Sir Joshua at Vauxhall. And not the least memorable figures in that sauntering crowd, though it numbered princes and ambassadors then; and on its tide and

torrent of fashion, floated all the beauty of the time ; and through its lighted avenues of trees, glided cabinet ministers and their daughters, royal dukes and their wives,



agreeable 'young ladies and gentlemen of eighty two,' and all the red-heeled macaronies; were those of the President, and the ancient history Professor, of the Royal Academy. A little later we trace Goldsmith from Vauxhall to the theatre, but his enjoyment is not so certain. Kelly had tried another comedy (*The School for Wives*) under a feigned name, and with somewhat better success, though it lived but a few brief nights. Yet Beauclerc (who also tells Lord Charlemont of the round of pleasures Goldsmith and Sir Joshua had been getting into) says of it: 'We have a new comedy here which is good for nothing; bad as it is, however, it succeeds very well, and has almost killed Goldsmith with envy.'

Cradock's account of what was really killing him is somewhat different from Beauclerc's, and will perhaps be thought more authentic. Although, according to the same letter of Beauclerc's, all the world but himself and a million of vulgar people were then in the country, Cradock had come up to town to place his wife under care of a dentist, and had taken lodgings in Norfolk Street to be near his friend. He found Goldsmith much altered, he says; at times very low; and he passed his mornings with him. He induced him once to dine in Norfolk Street: but his usual cheerfulness had gone, 'and all was forced.' The idea occurred to Cradock that money might be raised by a special subscription edition of the *Traveller* and *Deserted Village*, if consent could be obtained from the holders of the copyrights. 'Pray do what you please with them,' said Goldsmith sadly.

But he rather submitted, than encouraged, says Cradock ; and the scheme fell to the ground. ' Oh sir,' said two sister milliners, named Gun, who lived at the corner of Temple Lane and were among his creditors, ' sooner persuade him ' to let us work for him gratis, than suffer him to apply to ' any other. We are sure that he will pay us if he can.' Cradock ends his melancholy narrative by saying, that had Goldsmith freely laid open all the debts he had contracted, he is certain his zealous friends were so numerous that they would freely have contributed to his relief. There is reason to presume as much of Reynolds, certainly ; and that he had offered his aid. ' I mean,' Cradock adds, ' explicitly ' to assert only, that I believe he died miserably, and that ' his friends were not entirely aware of his distress.' Truly, it was to assert enough.

Yet before he died, and from the depth of that distress, his genius flashed forth once more. Johnson had returned to town after his three months' tour in the Hebrides ; parliament had again brought Burke to town ; Richard Burke was in London on the eve of his return to Grenada ; the old dining party had resumed their meetings at the St. James' Coffee House, and out of these meetings sprang *Retaliation*. More than one writer has professed to describe the particular scene from which it immediately rose, but their accounts are not to be reconciled with what is certainly known. Cumberland's is pure romance. The poem itself, however, with what was prefixed to it when published, sufficiently explains its own origin. What had formerly



been abrupt and strange in Goldsmith's manners had now so visibly increased, as to become matter of increased sport to such as were ignorant of its cause; and a proposition, made at one of the dinners when he was absent, to write a series of epitaphs upon him (his 'country dialect,' and his awkward person), was agreed to and put in practice by several of the guests. The active aggressors appear to have been Garrick, Doctor Barnard, Richard Burke, and Caleb Whitefoord. Cumberland says he, too, wrote an epitaph; but it was complimentary and grave, and hence the grateful return he received. None were actually preserved but Garrick's; but it will indicate what was doubtless (unless the exception of Cumberland be admitted) the tone of all.

Here lies poet Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,  
Who wrote like an angel but talk'd like poor Poll.

This, with the rest, was read to Goldsmith when he next appeared at the St. James' Coffee House. 'The Doctor 'was called on for Retaliation,' says the friend who published the poem with that name, 'and at their next meeting produced the following, which I think adds one leaf to his 'immortal wreath.' It is possible he may have been *asked* to retaliate, but not likely; very certainly, however, the poem was not produced at the next meeting. It was unfinished when he died. But fragments of it, as written from time to time, appear to have been handed about; and it is pretty clear that the masterly lines on Garrick were known some time before the others. This was a subject he had

studied thoroughly; most familiar had he reason to be with its lights and its shadows; very ample and various had been his personal experience of both; and whether anger or adulation should at last predominate, the reader of this narrative of his life has had abundant means of determining. But neither were visible in the character of Garrick. Indignation makes verses, says the poet; yet will the verses be all the better, in proportion as the indignation is not seen. The Garrick lines are quite perfect writing. Without anger, the satire is finished, keen, and uncompromising; the wit is adorned by most discriminating praise; and the truth is all the more merciless for exquisite good manners and good taste. The epitaph writers might well be alarmed. Dean Barnard and Whitefoord deprecated Goldsmith's wrath, in verses that still exist; and the flutter of fear became very perceptible. '*Retaliation*,' says Walter Scott, 'had the effect of placing the author on a more equal footing with his society than he had ever before assumed.' Fear might doubtless have had that effect, if Goldsmith could have visited St. James' Street again: but a sterner invitation awaited him. Allusions to Kenrick show he was still writing his retaliatory epitaphs in the middle of February; such of them as escaped during his progress were limited to very few of his acquaintance; and when the publication of the poem challenged wider respect for the writer, the writer had been a week in his grave.

Here lies David Garrick, describe me who can,  
*An abridgment of all that was pleasant in man;*

Yet, with talents like these, and an excellent heart,  
 The man had his failings, a dupe to his art.  
 Like an ill-judging beauty, his colours he spread,  
 And beplaster'd with rouge his own natural red.  
 On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting;  
*'Twas only that when he was off he was acting.*  
 As an actor, confess'd without rival to shine;  
 As a wit, if not first, in the very first line:  
 With no reason on earth to go out of his way,  
 He turn'd and he varied full ten times a day:  
*Though secure of our hearts, yet confoundedly sick*  
*If they were not his own by finessing and trick :*  
 He cast off his friends as a huntsman his pack,  
 For he knew when he pleased he could whistle them back.  
 Of praise a mere glutton, he swallowed what came,  
 And the puff of a dunce he mistook it for fame;  
*Till his relish grown callous, almost to disease,*  
*Who pepper'd the highest was surest to please.*  
 But let us be candid, and speak out our mind,  
 If dunces applauded, he paid them in kind.  
 Ye Kenricks, ye Kellys, and Woodfalls so grave,  
 What a commerce was yours, while you got and you gave!  
 How did Grub-street re-echo the shouts that you raised,  
 While he was be-Roscus'd, and you were be-praised!  
 But peace to his spirit, wherever it flies,  
 To act as an angel and mix with the skies:  
 Those poets, who owe their best fame to his skill,  
 Shall still be his flatterers, go where he will;  
*Old Shakespeare receive him with praise and with love,*  
*And Beaumonts and Bens be his Kellys above.*

Other brief passages of the poem which were handed about at the same time with this, Burke is said to have received under solemn injunctions of secrecy; which he promised to observe if they had passed into no other hands, but from which he released himself with all dispatch when told that Mrs. Cholmondely had also received a copy. It would be curious to know if his own epitaph, formerly

quoted, was in the manuscript confided to him. The plan of the poem, it is evident, grew far beyond its original purpose, as, 'with chaos and blunders encircling his head,' poor Goldsmith continued to work at it. It became something better than 'retaliation.' In the last lines, on which he is said to have been engaged when his fatal illness seized him, was the gratitude of a life. They will help to keep Reynolds immortal.

Here Reynolds is laid, and, to tell you my mind,  
 He has not left a wiser or better behind.  
 His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand;  
 His manners were gentle, complying, and bland;  
 Still born to improve us in every part,  
 His pencil our faces, his manners our heart.  
 To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,  
 When they judged without skill he was still hard of hearing :  
 When they talked of their Raphaels, Correggios, and stuff,  
 He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff.  
 By flattery unspoiled . . . .

It is not displeasing to think that Goldsmith's hand should have been tracing that unfinished line, when illness struck the pen from it for ever. It was in the middle of March 1774. Some little time before, he had gone to his Edgeware lodging, to pursue his labours undisturbed. Here, at length, he had finished the *Animated Nature* (his last letter was to a publisher, Mr. Nourse, who had bought Griffin's original interest, asking him to allow 'his friend Griffin' to purchase back a portion of the copyright; thanking him, at the same time, for an 'overpayment,' which in consideration of the completion, and its writer's necessities, Mr. Nourse had consented to make;

and throwing out an idea of extending the work into the vegetable and fossil kingdoms). Here, too, he was completing the *Grecian History*, making another *Abridgement of English History* for schools, translating Scarron's *Comic Romance*, revising (for the moderate payment of five guineas, vouchsafed by James Dodsley) a new edition of his *Enquiry into Polite Learning*, labouring to bring into shape the compilation on *Experimental Philosophy* which had been begun eight years before, writing his *Retaliation*, and making new resolves for the future. Such was the end, of unwearying and sordid toil, to which even his six years' term of established fame had brought him! The cycle of his life was complete; and in the same miserable labour wherein it had begun, it was to close.

Not without 'resolving' to the last, and still hoping to begin anew. He had bitterly felt a reproach which Johnson gave him at their latest interview before leaving London, when, having asked him and Reynolds to dinner at the Temple, to meet an old acquaintance to whom his *Dictionary* project had re-introduced him (Doctor Kippis, who tells the anecdote), Johnson silently reprov'd the extravagance of a too expensive dinner, by sending away a whole 'second course' untouched. Soon after that, he was taking measures to sell the lease of his Temple chambers; and here in Edgeware he was telling his farmer friends, that he should never again live longer than two months a year in London. 'One has a strange propensity,' says Boswell, describing a perpetual habit of his own, 'to

‘fix upon some point of time from whence a better course of life may begin.’ Ah, yes! It is so easy to settle that way what would otherwise never be settled, and comfort ourselves with a flattery of the future. ‘We seem mended at once, without having taken the trouble of mending.’ Unhappily it is from the same instinctive dislike of trouble that the after-failures of these formal resolutions come. Never will they cease, notwithstanding; till castle-building on the ground is as easy as to build castles in the air. The philosopher smiles at that word *never*, but to the last moment it is pronounced by us all. Here it was whispering to Goldsmith all sorts of enduring resolutions, when the sudden attack of an old illness warned him to seek advice in London. This was a local disorder that had grown from sedentary habits, and had required great care at every period of his life. It was ‘neglect,’ says Davies, which now brought it on. ‘It was continual vexation of mind, arising from his involved circumstances; and ‘Death, I really believe, was welcome to a man of his ‘great sensibility.’ In that case, the welcome visitor was come.

Goldsmith arrived in London in the middle of March, obtained relief from the immediate attack of disease, but was left struggling with symptoms of low nervous fever. He seems to have been anxious to attend the Club on Friday the 25th (Charles Fox, Sir Charles Bunbury, George Steevens, and Doctor George Fordyce, had just obtained their election); but in the afternoon of that day he took to his bed,

and at eleven o'clock at night a very benevolent as well as skilful surgeon-apothecary, named Hawes, who lived in the Strand, whom Goldsmith was in the habit of consulting, and to whose efforts to establish a humane society he had given active sympathy and assistance, was sent for. He found Goldsmith complaining of violent pain, extending over all the fore-part of his head; his tongue moist, his pulse at ninety, and his mind made up that he should be cured by James's fever-powders. He had derived such benefit from this fashionable medicine in previous attacks, that it seems to have left him with as obstinate a sense of its universal efficacy as Horace Walpole had, who swore he should take it if the house were on fire. Mr. Hawes saw at once, however, that, his complaint being more a nervous affection than a febrile disease, such a remedy would be dangerous; that it would force too large and sudden an exhaustion of the vital powers, to enable him to cope with the disease; and he implored him not to think of it. For more than half an hour, he says, he sat by the bedside, urging its probable danger; 'vehemently entreating' his difficult patient; but unable to prevail upon him to say he would not resort to it. Hawes then, after formal protest, said he had 'one request' to make of him. 'He 'very warmly asked me what that was.' It was that he would permit his friend Doctor Fordyce, who had formerly attended him, to be called in at once. He held out against this for some time; endeavoured to raise an obstacle by saying Fordyce was gone to spend the evening in Gerrard

Street ('where,' poor Goldsmith added, 'I should also 'have been if I had not been indisposed'); and at last reluctantly consented. Hawes dispatched the note to Gerrard Street; and Fordyce, arriving soon after Hawes had left, seems to have given Goldsmith as strong a warning against the fever-medicine: but as unavailingly. Hawes sent medicine and leeches soon after twelve; and in the hope that Fordyce would have succeeded where he had failed, did not send the fever-powders ordered: but Goldsmith continued obstinate. The leeches were applied, the medicine rejected, and the lad who brought them was sent back for a packet of the powders.

So far, in substance, is the narrative of Hawes; which there is no ground for disputing. (I omit everything which is not strictly descriptive of the illness; but the good surgeon had evidently a strong regard for his patient. 'His humanity and generosity,' he says, and this was experience he had proved in many humane projects, 'greatly exceeded the narrow limits of his fortune; and those who 'were no judges of the literary merit of the author, could 'not but love the man for that benevolence by which he 'was so strongly characterised.') Other facts, in what remains to be told, appeared in formal statements subsequently published by Newbery, the proprietor of the fever-powders, to vindicate the fame of his medicine. These were made and signed by Goldsmith's servant, John Eyles; his laundress, Mary Ginger; and a night nurse, Sarah Smith, called in on the second day of the illness. As soon as



Goldsmith took the powder sent him from the Strand, he protested it was the wrong powder; was very angry with Hawes; threatened to pay his bill next day, and have done with him; and certainly dispatched Eyles, in the afternoon of that day, for a fresh packet from Newbery's: sending at the same time for his laundress (she was wife of the head porter of the Temple), to 'come and sit by him until John returned;' describing himself, when she arrived, as worse; and damning Hawes ('those were his very words') for the mistake he had made. In the afternoon and night of Saturday, two of these fresh powders were administered, one by the servant, the other by the nurse; the latter was also sent for another apothecary, named Maxwell, living near St. Dunstan's Church, who came, but declined to act as matters then stood: and from that time 'the patient followed the advice of his physicians.' He was too ill to make further resistance. Such is the substance of the evidence of the servants; in which a somewhat exaggerated form was given to what might in itself be substantially true, yet no way affect the veracity of Mr. Hawes. If Goldsmith asserted that a wrong powder had been sent, the sudden impulse to think so was not perhaps unnatural, after the course he had himself unwisely persisted in; but that Hawes really made the mistake, is not credible. Reynolds and Burke made later investigation, and wholly acquitted him; a recent inquirer and intelligent practitioner (Mr. White Cooper) confirms strongly the opinion on which he seems to have acted; nor did

poor Goldsmith himself very long adhere to the charge he had made.

Hawes (the substance of whose brief narrative I resume, with such illustrations as other sources have supplied) did not see his patient when he called on Saturday morning. 'His master was dozing, he lay very quiet,' was the announcement of Eyles. He called again at night; when, 'with great appearance of concern,' the man told him that everything was worse. Hawes went in, and found Goldsmith extremely exhausted and reduced, his pulse very quick and small; and on inquiring how he did, 'he sighed deeply, and in a very low voice said he wished he had taken my friendly advice last night.' To other questions he made no answer. He was so weak and low that he had neither strength nor spirit to speak. There was now, clearly, danger of the worst; and Fordyce next day proposed to call another physician, naming Doctor Turton, into consultation. Goldsmith's consent was obtained to this step at eight o'clock on Monday morning, and Hawes retired altogether from attendance. The patient had again passed a very bad night, 'and lay absolutely sunk with weakness.' Fordyce and Turton met that day; and continued their consultations twice daily, till all was over.

A week passed. The symptoms so fluctuating in the course of it, and the evidence of active disease so manifestly declining, that even sanguine expectations of recovery would appear to have been at one time entertained. But Goldsmith could not sleep. His reason seemed clear, what he

mind was always perfectly sensible, he was at times even cheerful; but sleep had deserted him, his appetite was gone, and it became obvious, in the state of weakness to which he had been reduced, that want of sleep might in itself be fatal. It then occurred to Doctor Turtan to put a very pregnant question to his patient. 'Your pulse,' he said, 'is in greater disorder than it should be, from the degree of fever which you have. *Is your mind at ease?*' 'No, *it is not,*' was Goldsmith's melancholy answer. They are the last words we are to hear him utter in this world. The end arrived suddenly and unexpectedly. He lay in the sound and calm sleep which so anxiously had been looked for, at midnight on Sunday the 3rd of April; his respiration was easy and natural, his skin warm and moist, and the favourable turn was thought to have come. But at four o'clock in the morning, the apothecary Maxwell was called up in haste, and found him in strong convulsions. These continued without intermission; he sank rapidly; and at a quarter before five o'clock on the morning of Monday the 4th of April 1774, having then lived five months beyond his forty-fifth year, Oliver Goldsmith died.

When Burke was told, he burst into tears. Reynolds was in his painting-room when the messenger went to him: but at once he laid his pencil aside, which in times of great family distress he had not been known to do; left his painting-

room; and did not re-enter it that day. Northcote describes the blow as the 'severest Sir Joshua ever received.' Nor was the day less gloomy for Johnson. 'Poor Goldsmith is gone' was his anticipation of the evil tidings. 'Of poor dear Doctor Goldsmith,' he wrote three months later to Boswell, 'there is little more to be told. He died 'of a fever, I am afraid more violent by uneasiness of mind. His debts began to be heavy, and all his resources were exhausted. Sir Joshua is of opinion that he owed not less than two thousand pounds. Was ever poet so trusted before?' He spoke of the loss for years, as with the tenderness of a recent grief; and in his little room hung round with portraits of his favourite friends, Goldsmith had the place of honour. 'So, your poor, wild Doctor Goldsmith,' wrote Mrs. Carter to Mrs. Vesey, 'is dead. He died of a fever, poor man. I am sincerely glad to hear he has no family, so his loss will not be felt in domestic life.' The respectable and learned old lady could not possibly know in what other *undomestic* ways it might be felt. The staircase of Brick Court is said to have been filled with mourners, the reverse of domestic; women without a home, without domesticity of any kind, with no friend but him they had come to weep for; outcasts of that great, solitary, wicked city, to whom he had never forgotten to be kind and charitable. And he had domestic mourners too. His coffin was re-opened at the request of Miss Horneck and her sister (such was the regard he was known to have for them!), that a lock might be cut from his hair. It was

in Mrs. Gwyn's possession when she died, after nearly seventy years.

A public funeral was at first proposed ; and Lords Shelburne and Louth, Reynolds, Burke, Beauclerc, and Garrick, were to have borne the pall. It was then felt that a private ceremony would better become the circumstances in which he had died. Everything he possessed, including such small fragments of property as he had left at the Edgeware Cottage, was sold by public auction (his ' large, valuable, ' and well-chosen library of curious and scarce books ' ; his ' household furniture and other effects ' ) : but Bott, Griffin, and others, still remained with unsatisfied claims ; and when his brother Maurice arrived in London the following month, and ' administered, ' he went away empty-handed as he came. Burke and Reynolds directed all arrangements ; Hawes saw them carried into effect ; and the fifth day after his death was appointed for his funeral. Reynolds's nephew Palmer (afterwards Dean of Cashel), attended as chief mourner : and with him were Mr. Day (afterward Sir John Day), his relative and namesake heretofore mentioned who became the Irish judge, Mr. Hawes, and a friend, Mr. Etherington. These were unexpectedly joined on the morning of the funeral by Hugh Kelly, who, in the presence of that great sorrow, had only remembered happier and more friendly days, and who was seen still standing weeping at the grave as the others moved away. So, at five o'clock on the evening of Saturday the 9th of April, the remains of Oliver Goldsmith were committed to their

final resting-place in the burial ground of the Temple Church. The grave is known, though no memorial indicates it to the pilgrim or the stranger.

The idea of a monument in Westminster Abbey was the suggestion of Reynolds; and he selected the spot over the south door in Poets' Corner, where it was subsequently placed in the area of a pointed arch, between the monuments of Gay and the Duke of Argyll. It consisted of a medallion portrait and tablet. Nollekens was the sculptor, and two years after Goldsmith's death the inscription was written by Johnson. 'I send you the poor dear Doctor's epitaph,' he writes to Reynolds, with grief apparently as fresh as though their loss had been of yesterday. 'Read it first 'yourself; and if you then think it right, show it to the 'Club.' The principal members of the Club, with other friends, dined soon after at Reynolds's; and so many objections were started on its being read, that it was resolved to submit them to Johnson in the form of a round robin, such as sailors adopt at sea when a matter of grievance is started, and no one wishes to stand first or last in remonstrance with the captain. After stating the great pleasure with which the intended epitaph had been read, and the admiration it had created for its elegant composition and masterly style 'considered abstractedly,' this round robin, which was dictated by Burke, went on to say that its circumscribers were yet of opinion that the character of Goldsmith as a writer, particularly as a poet, was not perhaps delineated with all the exactness which

Doctor Johnson was capable of giving it; and that therefore, with deference to his superior judgment, they humbly requested he would at least take the trouble of revising it, and of making such alterations and additions as he should think proper upon a farther perusal. This part of the remonstrance Johnson received with good humour; and desired Sir Joshua, who presented it, to tell the gentlemen he would alter the epitaph in any manner they pleased, as to the sense of it. But then came the pinch of the mutiny. Langton, who was present when the remonstrance was drawn up, had not objected thus far; but to what now was added, he refused to give his name. 'But if we might venture to express our wishes, they would lead us to request that he would write the epitaph in English rather than in Latin, as we think that the memory of so eminent an English writer ought to be perpetuated in the language to which his works are likely to be so lasting an ornament, which we also know to have been the opinion of the late Doctor himself.' Langton was too sturdy a classic to assent to this. His scholarly sympathies had already invited and received, from Johnson, even a Greek lament for their common loss. The names circumscribed were those of Burke, Franklin (the translator of *Sophocles*), Chamier, Colman, Vachell (a friend of Sir Joshua's), Reynolds, Forbes (the Scotch baronet and biographer of Beattie), Barnard, Sheridan, Metcalfe (another great friend of Sir Joshua's, and a humane as well as active member of the house of commons), Gibbon, and Joseph Warton. 'I wonder,' exclaimed Johnson, when

he read this part of the remonstrance, and the names, 'that ' Joe Warton, a scholar by profession, should be such a fool. ' I should have thought Mund Burke, too, would have had ' more sense.' His formal answer was not less emphatic. He requested Reynolds at once to acquaint his fellow mutineers, that he would never consent to disgrace the walls of Westminster Abbey with an English inscription. The Latin was accordingly placed upon the marble, where it now remains.

OLIVARI GOLDSMITH  
 Poetæ, Physici, Historici,  
 qui nullum fere scribendi genus  
 non tetigit,  
 nullum quod tetigit non ornavit :  
 sive risus essent movendi,  
 sive lacrymæ,  
 affectuum potens, at lenis dominator ;  
 ingenio sublimis, vividus, versatilis ;  
 oratione grandis, nitidus, venustus :  
 hoc monumento memoriam coluit  
 Sodalium amor,  
 Amicorum fides,  
 Lectorum veneratio.  
 Natus Hiberniâ, Forneisæ Lonfordiensis  
 in loco cui nomen Pallas,  
 Nov xxix. MDCXXXI.  
 Eblanæ literis institutus,  
 Objit Londini  
 Apr. iv. MDCLXXIV.

While Goldsmith lay upon his death-bed, there was much discussion in London about the rights of authors. After two decisions in the courts of common law, which



declared an author's property to be perpetual in any work he might have written, the question had been brought upon appeal before the House of Lords, and the opinions of the judges taken. Five then declared their belief that, by the common law of England, the sole right of multiplying copies of any work was vested for ever in him, by the exercise of whose genius, faculties, or industry, such work had been produced; and that no enactment had yet been passed, of force to limit that estate in fee. Six, on the other hand, held that this perpetual property which undoubtedly existed at common law, had been reduced to a short term by an act passed in the reign of Queen Anne, and somewhat strangely entitled (if this were indeed its right construction) as for the encouragement of literature. Chief Justice Mansfield's opinion would have equalised these opposing judgments; but, though retaining it still as strongly as when it had decided the right in his own court, the highest tribunal of common law, he thought it becoming not then to repeat it. Lord Camden upon this moved and carried a reversal of Lord Mansfield's decision, by reversing the decree which had been founded upon it. The House of Lords thus declared the statute of Anne to have been a confiscation to the public use, after a certain brief term, of such rights of property in the fruits of his own labour and genius, as, up to the period of its enactment, an author had undoubtedly possessed.

Lord Camden glorified this result for the sake of literature itself. For he held that genius was not intended for

the benefit of the individual who possessed it, but for the universal benefit of the race; and believing Fame to be its sufficient reward, thought that all who deserved so divine a recompense, spurning delights and living laborious days, should scorn and reject every other. The real price which genius sets upon its labours, he fervently exclaimed, is Immortality; and posterity pays that. On the other hand, Mr. Justice Willes announced an opinion hardly less earnest in its tone, to the effect that he held it to be wise in every state to encourage men of letters, without precise regard to what the measure of their powers might be; and that the easiest and most equal way of doing it, was by securing to them the property of their own works. By that means, nobody contributed who was not willing; and though a good book might be run down, and a bad one cried up, for a time, yet sooner or later the reward would be fairly proportioned to the merit of the work. 'A writer's fame,' added this learned and upright judge, 'will not be the less, that he has bread; without being under the necessity, that he may get bread, of prostituting his pen to flattery or to party.'

Such interest as society showed in the discussion, went wholly with the majestic sentiments of Camden. 'The very thought,' said Lord Chatham to Lord Shelburne, 'of coining literature into ready rhino! Why, it is as illiberal as it is illegal.' It is nevertheless probable that the reader who may have accompanied me through this narrative thus far, will think it not illiberal to put these

rival and opposing doctrines to the practical test of the Life and Death it has recorded. To that they are now left; with such illustrative comment from the nature and the claims of Goldsmith's writings, and the peculiarities of his character, as already I have amply supplied.

Let this alone be added. The debt which Lord Camden proclaimed due to genius (though, from his conduct on the only occasion when they met, he probably did not think it due to Goldsmith), has to this date been amply paid in the fame of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, the *Citizen of the World*, the *Deserted Village*, and the *Traveller*. Goldsmith died in the prime of his age and his powers, because his strength had been overtaken and his mind was ill at ease; but, by this, the world's enjoyment of what he left has been in no respect weakened or impaired. Nor was his lot upon the whole an unhappy one, for him or for us. Nature is vindicated in the sorrows of her favourite children; for a thousand enduring and elevating pleasures survive, to redeem their temporary sufferings. The acquisition of wealth, the purchase of tranquillity and worldly ease, so eagerly coveted and unscrupulously toiled for, are not themselves obtained without attendant losses; and not without much to soften the harshness of anxiety and poverty, to show what gains may be saved out of the greatest apparent disadvantage, and to render us all some solid assistance out of even his thriftless imprudent insolvent circumstances, had Goldsmith lived and died. He worthily did the work that was in him to do; proved himself in his garret a gentleman of nature;

left the world no ungenerous bequest; and went his unknown way. Nor have posterity been backward to acknowledge the debt which his contemporaries left them to discharge; and it is with calm, unruffled, joyful aspect on the one hand, and with grateful, loving, eager admiration on the other, that the creditor and his debtors at length stand face to face. All this is to the world's honour as well as gain; which has yet to consider, notwithstanding, with a view to its own larger profit in both, if its debt to the man of genius might not earlier be discharged, and if the thorns that only become invisible beneath the laurel that overgrows his grave, should not rather, while he lives, be plucked away. It is not an act of parliament which can determine this; even though it were an act to restore to the man of letters the rights of which the legislature has thought fit to deprive him. The world must exercise those higher privileges which legislation follows and obeys, before the proper remedy can be found for literary wrongs. Mere wealth would not have supplied it in Goldsmith's day, and does not supply it now. It must flow from a higher sense than has at any period yet prevailed in England, of the duties and responsibilities assumed by the public writer; and of the social consideration and respect that their effectual discharge should have undisputed right to claim. The world will be greatly the gainer, when such time shall arrive; and when the biography of the man of genius shall no longer be a picture of the most harsh struggles and mean necessities to which man's life is subject, exhibited as in shameful contrast

to the calm and classic glory of his fame. But with society itself rests the advent of that time.



THE MEN WHO TO THE WORLD MOST GOOD HAVE BROUGHT,  
HAVE BEEN THE MEN MOST CALLED ON TO ENDURE ;  
AND TILL THE WORLD FOR WHICH THESE MEN HAVE THOUGHT,  
THINKS FOR ITSELF, THERE WILL NOT BE A CURE.

## ADVERTISEMENT, NOTES, AND CORRECTIONS.

OCCASIONAL kindness and service rendered to this biography have been referred to in the course of it. The diligent labour, enthusiasm, and ability displayed by Mr. Prior, in his edition and elaborate memoir published twelve years ago, laid every subsequent writer under weighty obligations to him. The author has to add, with grateful acknowledgment, that three of the designs in this volume are friendly contributions to it from Mr. Stanfield and Mr. Maclise; that for three others he has to thank the ready kindness of Mr. Leech and Mr. Richard Doyle; that the rest of the designs have been supplied by Mr. R. J. Hamerton; and that for the engraved head on the title-page he is indebted to the courtesy of Mr. Longman. It appeared in that edition of the *Poetical Works* which had the benefit of Mr. Bolton Corney's care and judgment in its preparation; and which, apart from the grace and beauty of the illustrations contributed to it by the Etching Club, is by far the most correct and careful of the existing editions of Goldsmith's Poetry.

56, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS,  
March, 1848.

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1. Pallas is often written Pallice, or Pallis, and seems to have been so written by Goldsmith's father.
5. Streaun was a physician who had taken orders. He died eleven years ago, at nearly ninety years of age. He then held the perpetual cure of St. Peter's, in Athlone; but had formerly succeeded Henry Goldsmith in the curacy the latter occupied at the period of his death (probably that of Killkenny West). His relative by marriage, the Rev. Edward Mangin, to whose intelligent enquiries we owe much of our knowledge of the poet's youth, still lives in Bath.
7. The *Biographical Preface*, for which the materials had been collected by Percy, Malone, and other friends, was drawn up in the first instance by Percy's friend, Doctor Campbell; it then received ample correction from Percy, whose remarks and interlineations were engrafted into

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the text; but on its being handed to the publishers of the *Miscellaneous Works*, a disagreement sprang up with Mr. Rose (Cowper's friend), employed as their editor, and Percy ultimately declined to sanction the publication. His correspondence with Malone shows ample traces of this quarrel, and of his dissatisfaction with Mr. Rose, whom he accuses of impertinently tampering with the memoir. 'I never,' writes Malone to Percy, in corroboration of his complaints, 'observed any of those grimaces or fooleries that the interpolator talks of.' It should be added that many of the materials for a life which Percy had obtained from Goldsmith himself, were lost by being intrusted to Johnson, when the latter proposed to be his friend's biographer. But the failure of Johnson's design arose less from his own dilatoriness than from a dif-

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scully started by Francis Newbery's surviving partner (Carnan), who held the copyright of *She Stoops to Conquer*, and who refused to join the other possessors of Goldsmith's writings in the 'Edition and Memoir' which Johnson had undertaken.

18. For 'Bernard,' read 'Barnard.'

34. For 'fifteen,' read 'seventeen.'

37. I subjoin the letter referred to in the text. It is dated Edinburgh, Sept. 26, 1763; and is addressed to Robert Bryanton at Ballymahon, Ireland. 'MY DEAR BOB, How many good excuses (and you know I was ever good at an excuse) might I call up to vindicate my past shameful silence. I might tell how I wrote a long letter on my first coming hither, and seem vastly angry at my not receiving an answer; I might allege that business (with business you know I was always pestered) had never given me time to finger a pen. But I suppress those, and twenty more as plausible, and as easily invented, since they might be attended with a slight inconvenience of being known to be lies. Let me then speak truth. An hereditary indolence (I have it from the mother's side) has hitherto prevented my writing to you, and still prevents my writing at least twenty-five letters more, due to my friends in Ireland. No turnspit dog gets up into his wheel with more reluctance than I sit down to write; yet no dog ever loved the roast meat he turns better than I do him I now address. Yet what shall I say now I am entered? Shall I tire you with a description of this unfruitful country; where I must lead you over their hills all brown with heath, or their valleys scarcely able to feed a rabbit? Man alone seems to be the only creature who has arrived to the natural size in this poor soil. Every part of the country presents the same dismal landscape. No grove, nor brook, lend their music to cheer the stranger, or make the inhabitants forget their poverty. Yet with all these disadvantages to call him down to humility, a Scotchman is one of the proudest things alive. The poor have pride ever ready to relieve them. If mankind should happen to despise them, they are masters of their own admiration; and that they can plentifully bestow upon themselves. From their pride and poverty, as I take it, results one advantage this

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country enjoys; namely, the gentlemen here are much better bred than among us. No such characters here as our fox-hunters; and they have expressed great surprise when I informed them, that some men in Ireland of one thousand pounds a year, spend their whole lives in running after a hare, drinking to be drunk, and . . . Truly, if such a being, equipped in his hunting dress, came among a circle of Scotch gentry, they would behold him with the same astonishment that a countryman does King George on horseback. The men here have generally high cheek bones, and are lean and swarthy, fond of action, dancing in particular. Now that I have mentioned dancing, let me say something of their balls, which are very frequent here. When a stranger enters the dancing hall, he sees one end of the room taken up by the ladies, who sit dismally in a group by themselves: in the other end stand their penive partners that are to be: but no more intercourse between the sexes than there is between two countries at war. The ladies indeed may ogle, and the gentlemen sigh; but an embargo is laid on any closer commerce. At length, to interrupt hostilities, the lady directress, or attendant, or what you will, pitches upon a lady and gentleman to walk a minuet; which they perform with a formality that approaches to despondence. After five or six couple have thus walked the gauntlet, all stand up to country dances; each gentleman furnished with a partner from the aforesaid lady directress; so they dance much, say nothing, and thus concludes our assembly. I told a Scotch gentleman that such profound silence resembled the ancient procession of the Roman matrons in honour of Ceres; and the Scotch gentleman told me (and faith, I believe he was right) that I was a very great pedant for my pains. Now I am come to the ladies; and to show that I love Scotland, and everything that belongs to so charming a country, I insist on it, and will give him leave to break my head that denies it, that the Scotch ladies are ten thousand times finer and handsomer than the Irish. To be sure, now, I see your sisters Betty and Peggy vastly surprised at my partiality: but tell them

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flatly, I don't value them, or their fine skins, or eyes, or good sense, or —, a potato; for I say, and will maintain it, and as a convincing proof (I am in a great passion) of what I assert, the Scotch ladies say it themselves. But to be less serious; where will you find a language so prettily become a pretty mouth as the broad Scotch? And the women here speak it in its highest purity; for instance, teach one of your young ladies at home to pronounce the "Whoar wull I gong?" with a becoming widening of the mouth, and I'll lay my life they'll wound every hearer. We have no such character here as a coquet, but alas! how many envious prudes! Some days ago I walked into my Lord Kilcoubry's (don't be surprised, my lord is but a glover), when the Duchess of Hamilton (that fair who sacrificed her beauty to her ambition, and her inward peace to a title and gilt equipage) passed by in her chariot; her battered husband, or more properly the guardian of her charms, sat by her side. Straight, envy began, in the shape of no less than three ladies who sat with me, to find faults in her faultless form. "For my part," says the first, "I think, what I always thought, that the Duchess has too much of the red in her complexion." "Madam, I am of your opinion," says the second; "I think her face has a palish cast too much on the delicate order." "And let me tell you," added the third lady, whose mouth was puckered up to the size of an issue, "that the Duchess has fine lips, but she wants a mouth." At this every lady drew up her mouth as if going to pronounce the letter P. But how ill, my Bob, does it become me to ridicule women with whom I have scarcely any correspondence? There are 'tis certain, handsome women here; and 'tis as certain they have handsome men to keep them company. An ugly and a poor man is society only for himself; and such society the world lets me enjoy in great abundance. . . . I leave you to your own choice what to write. While I live, know you have a true friend in yours, &c. &c. &c. OLIVER GOLDSMITH. P.S. Give my sincere respects (not compliments, do you mind) to your agreeable family, and give my service to my mother if you see her; for, as you express

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it in Ireland, I have a sneaking kindness for her still. Direct to me, —, Student in Physic, in Edinburgh.'

38. The first letter mentioned in the text is dated 8th May, 1753, and runs thus: 'MY DEAR UNCLE, In your letter (the only one I received from Kilmore), you call me the philosopher who carries all his goods about him. Yet how can such a character fit me, who have left behind in Ireland every thing I think worth possessing; friends that I loved, and a society that pleased while it instructed? Who but must regret the loss of such enjoyments? Who but must regret his absence from Kilmore, that ever knew it as I did? Here, as reclusé as the Turkish Spy at Paris, I am almost unknown to every body, except some few who attend the professors of physic as I do. Apropos, I shall give you the professors' names, and, as far as occurs to me, their characters; and first, as most deserving, Mr. Munro, Professor of Anatomy; this man has brought the science he teaches to as much perfection as it is capable of; and not content with barely teaching anatomy, he launches out into all the branches of physic, when all his remarks are now and useful. 'Tis he, I may venture to say, that draws hither such a number of students from most parts of the world, even from Russia. He is not only a skilful physician, but an able orator, and delivers things in their nature obscure in so easy a manner, that the most unlearned may understand him. Plume, Professor of Chemistry, understands his business well, but delivers himself so ill, that he is but little regarded. Alston, Professor of Materia Medica, speaks much, but little to the purpose. The Professors of Theory and Practice (of Physic) say nothing but what we may find in books laid before us; and speak that in so drowsy and heavy a manner, that their hearers are not many degrees in a better state than their patients. You see then, dear sir, that Munro is the only great man among them; so that I intend to hear him another winter, and go then to hear Albinus, the great professor at Leyden. I read (with satisfaction) a science the most pleasing in nature, so that my labours are but a relaxation, and, I may truly say, the only thing



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here that gives me pleasure. How I enjoy the pleasing hope of returning with skill, and to find my friends stand in no need of my assistance! How many happy years do I wish you! and nothing but want of health can take from you happiness, since you so well pursue the paths that conduct to virtue. I am, my dear Uncle, your most obliged, most affectionate nephew, OLIVER GOLDSMITH. P.S. I draw this time for *G.*, and will draw next October but for *L.*, as I was obliged to buy everything since I came to Scotland, shirts not even excepted. I am a little more early the first year than I shall be for the future, for I absolutely will not trouble you before the time hereafter. My best love attend Mr. and Mrs. Lauder, Heaven preserve them! I am again your dutiful nephew, O.G. I have been a month in the Highlands. I set out the first day on foot, but an ill-natured corn I have got on my toe has for the future prevented that cheap method of travelling; so the second day I hired a horse of about the size of a ram, and he walked away (trot he could not) as pensive as his master. In three days we reached the Highlands. This letter would be too long if it contained the description I intend giving of that country, so shall make it the subject of my next. The second letter is not dated, but was undoubtedly written at the close of 1753. MY DEAR UNCLE, After having spent two winters in Edinburgh, I now prepare to go to France on the 10th of next February. I have seen all that this country can exhibit in the medical way, and therefore intend to visit Paris, where the great Mr. Farhein, Petit, and Du Hammel de Monceau instruct their pupils in all the branches of medicine. They speak French, and consequently I shall have much the advantage of most of my countrymen, as I am perfectly acquainted with that language, and few who leave Ireland are so. Since I am upon so pleasing a topic as self applause, give me leave to say that the circle of science which I have run through, before I undertook the study of physic, is not only useful, but absolutely necessary to the making a skilful physician. Such sciences enlarge our understanding, and sharpen our sagacity; and what is a practitioner without both but an empiric, for

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never yet was a disorder found entirely the same in two patients. A quack, unable to distinguish the particularities in each disease, prescribes at a venture: if he finds such a disorder may be called by the general name of fever for instance, he has a set of remedies which he applies to cure it, nor does he desist till his medicines are run out, or his patient has lost his life. But the skilful physician distinguishes the symptoms, manages the sterility of nature, or prunes her luxuriance; nor does he depend so much on the efficacy of medicines as on their proper application. I shall spend this spring and summer in Paris, and the beginning of next winter go to Leyden. The great Albinus is still alive there, and 'twill be proper to go, though only to have it said that we have studied in so famous an university. . . How does my dear cousin Jenny, and has she recovered her late complaint? How does my poor Jack Goldsmith? I fear his disorder is of such a nature as he won't easily recover. I wish, my dear Sir, you would make me happy by another letter before I go abroad, for there I shall hardly hear from you. I shall carry just 3*l.* to France, with good store of clothes, shirts, &c. &c., and that with economy will serve. . . I have nothing new to add from this country; and I beg, dear Sir, you will excuse this letter, so filled with egotism. I wish you may be revenged on me, by sending an answer filled with nothing but an account of yourself. I am, dear Uncle, your most devoted OLIVER GOLDSMITH. Give my — how shall I express it? Give my earnest love to Mr. and Mrs. Lauder.

48. For 'kinsman,' read 'brother-in-law.'

55. The lines quoted from the *Træceller* are given by mistake from one of the earlier editions. The sixth, published in 1770, is undoubtedly the best. 'Mansion,' in the third line, should be 'mansions'; and, in the sixteenth, 'breaths' should be 'breasts.' The improvement by the change to the latter word is very marked and striking.

'Cheerful at morn he wakes from short repose,  
Breasts the keen air, and carols as he goes.'

82, 83. The Poker Club was not so named till 1762. But the men spoken of in the text were precisely that select

- PAGE section of Edinburgh society, already existing as a Club, which, in Scotland being refused a Scotch Militia, called itself the Poker, 'to stir up the fire of the nation.'
84. For 'turns,' read 'turn.'
94. For 'Miller,' read 'Milles.'
101. For 'Newberry,' read 'Newbery.'
115. For 'Lawder,' read 'Lauder.'
155. For 'Eastern,' read 'Easton.'
155. I had not the original authority immediately at hand when the quotation beginning 'I called on Goldsmith' was made. Hence there are some verbal inaccuracies, though not important. 'Poor and miserable,' (155) should be 'poor and uncomfortable.' 'Miserable dirty-looking room,' (156) should be 'wretched dirty room.' 'Of a very becoming demeanour,' (156) should be 'of very decent behaviour.'
263. For 'Lyttleton,' read 'Lyttelton.' The name affixed to the catchpenny collection of letters referred to in the text was that of the second Lord Lyttelton.
263. For *Gentleman's Magazine*, read *European Magazine*.
286. It may be necessary (to avoid misapprehension) to remark that the artist, before executing the design in this page, had failed to obtain a drawing of the 'portrait' referred to in the text.
271. For 'under-secretary at-war,' read 'secretary in the War Office.' Chamier was not appointed under-secretary till 1775. In the account of the Club are one or two slight inaccuracies, but they will be found corrected in subsequent parts of the narrative. Thus the number of members was definitively limited to twelve in the second year of the Club; and they changed the night to Friday earlier, and did not substitute the dinner for the supper till somewhat later, than I at first state. Obvious errors exist in every description of this celebrated society, from the first supplied by Malone to the last furnished by Mr. Hatchett.
- 295-299. A brief letter of Goldsmith's with which I have been favoured since this part of my narrative was printed, corroborates the statements made in it. It would seem that between the date of his leaving Wine Office Court in 'an early month of 1764,' (p. 295) and his return to Islington at 'the beginning of April' in that year (p. 299), he had occupied, while his attic in the Library Staircase of the Temple was preparing, a temporary lodging in Gray's Inn; and that the engagement with the Dodslays which I have described as opened at this time (p. 296), had actually proceeded as far as the preparation of copy, and the claim for advance of money. This, as well as the sharp poverty he was suffering (p. 297), appears from the brief note to John Doddsley which has been communicated to me by my friend Mr. Peter Cunningham, whose success in matters of literary research is as undoubted as the ability with which he communicates his discoveries. 'Sir,' it runs, being dated from 'Gray's Inn,' on the 10th of March, 1764, 'I shall take it as a favour if you can let me have ten guineas per bearer, for which I promise to account. I am, sir, your humble servant, OLIVER GOLDSMITH. P.S. I shall call to see you on Wednesday next with copy, &c.' Whether the money was advanced or the copy supplied does not appear.
297. For 'blossoming,' read 'blooming.'
299. The text of the song quoted is from collation of the early and later copies.
305. For 'Lady Susan Ilchester,' read 'Lady Susan Fox.'
317. Thomson's letter quoted in the text first appeared in Seward's *Anecdotes* several years after Goldsmith's death.
319. The *Geographie Curieuse*, which appears to have been Goldsmith's authority, was nevertheless itself incorrect, in the family name of the brothers. They were George and Luke, as stated, and George underwent the punishment of the 'iron crown'; but the family name was Dosa. See *Biographie Universelle* Tom. xi. p. 604.
330. For 'monthly,' read 'weekly.'
340. Percy's election is here a little antedated. See p. 496.
355. The statement that Goldsmith had not, as I have said, 'claimed the interval for any purpose of retouching his work,' is strengthened by a communication of Doctor Farr's to Percy. The Doctor, mentioning some instances of haste or carelessness in the *Picar*, was told by Goldsmith that it was not from want of time they had not been corrected, but for another reason. 'I got £60 for the copy; and had I made it ever so perfect or correct, I should not have had a shilling more.'
- 370, 371. The 'occasional verses' attributed by Goldsmith to Nugent in

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- his Collection 'for Young Ladies,' ought to have been given to Lord Lyttelton. The origin of the mistake is obvious. Nugent had written an 'Epistle to —,' beginning
- 'Clarinda, dearly lov'd attend  
The counsels of a faithful friend ;'  
and this had become confounded in Goldsmith's recollection with Lyttelton's 'Advice to a Lady,' beginning
- 'The counsels of a friend, Belinda, hear.'
376. For 'author's night,' read 'author's nights.'
385. For 'General,' read 'Colonel.' Lee's commission of 'General' was given him by Washington.
386. For 'Macaulay,' read 'Macaulay.'
386. For 'Thomas,' read 'Joseph' War-  
ton.
409. For this letter, found among the papers of Mr. Morris, I am indebted to the kindness of my friend Mr. Raymond.
463. For 'Bishop's brother,' read 'Bishop's son.'
480. For 'bak,' read 'back.'
505. Cadell became subsequently the owner of a part of this copyright, as the assignee of Davies; but the fact does not vitiate the statement in the text.
581. For semicolon after 'pantomimes' substitute comma.
693. Mr. Croker, in his greatly enriched edition of *Boswell's Johnson*, very recently published in a single volume (which, as it now stands, and in spite of some few annotations I could wish to see removed, is one of the best edited books in the language), has given a translation of the Epitaph on Goldsmith's Monument so nearly literal, and at the same time so faithful to the spirit and manner of the original, that I prefer quoting it to making an inferior attempt. Mr. Croker justly expresses himself at a loss to discover how an English inscription should disgrace an English church, or a writer whose fame is exclusively English; and seems disposed,

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on the other hand, to think a Latin inscription, in such a place, and for such a purpose, about as absurd in principle as Smollett's dinner after the manner of the ancients.

## OF OLIVER GOLDSMITH . .

A Poet, Naturalist, and Historian, who left scarcely any style of writing untouched, and touched nothing that he did not adorn.

Of all the passions, whether smiles were to be moved or tears, a powerful yet gentle master; in genius, sublime, vivid, versatile, in style, elevated, clear, elegant . . .  
The love of Companions, the fidelity of Friends, and the veneration of Readers, have by this monument honoured The Memory.

He was born in Ireland, At a place called Fallas, (in the parish) of Forney, (and county) of Longford, On the 29th Nov. 1731, Educated at the (University of) Dublin, And died in London, 4th April, 1774.

I may here subjoin, with a translation from the same hand which is infinitely better than that where-with Mr. Seward favoured the world in his *Anecdotes*, and is indeed both spirited and faithful, the Greek tetra-stich which Johnson (p. 692) sent to Langton.

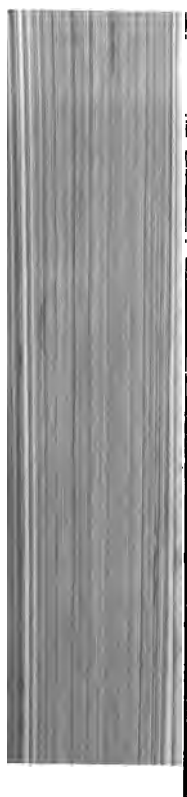
Τὸν τάφος ἀνεμάει τὸν Ὀλιβιέρου  
νόστιν  
" Ἀρεταὶ μὴ σμιμῶν, Ἡίρι, πόθει  
πάντι.  
Οἱ τοὶ μέγαλι θύρι, μίσην χέρι,  
ἔργα θαλασσῶν,  
Κλαίει σποντῆ, ἰσχυρῶν,  
φουζιῶν.

Here GOLDSMITH lies. O ye, who deeds of Eld  
Or Nature's works, or sacred  
Song regard;  
With reverence tread . . for he in  
all excelled;  
Historian and Philosopher and  
Bard.

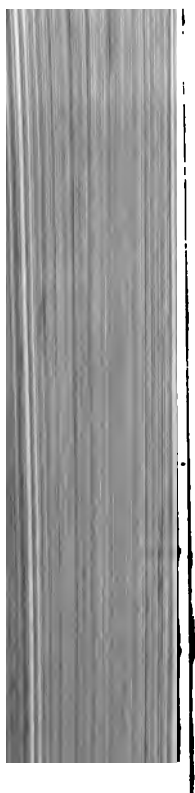
THE END.

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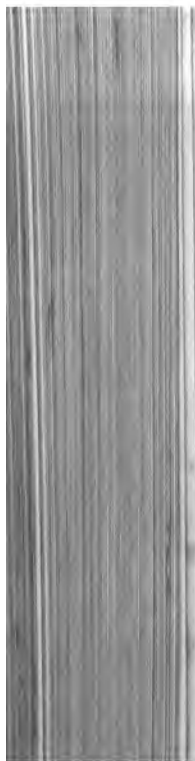








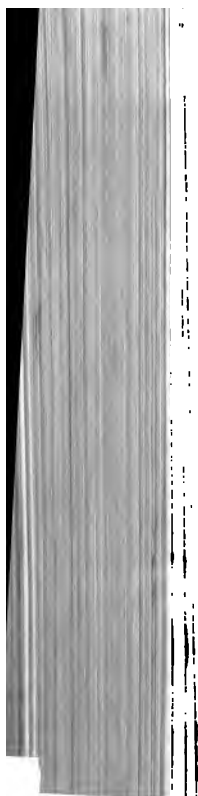












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